607

THE

WARD OF DELAMERE.

A TALE.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PINCHARD,

Author of "Mystery and Confidence, the Blind Child, &c."

Inscribed, by Permission, to

MRS. G. A. ROBINSON.

"Then gently scan your brother man,
  "Still gentler sister woman,
"Though they may gang a kennin wrang,
  "To step aside is human;
"One point must still be greatly dark;
  "The moving, *why* they do it,
"And just as lamely can we mark
  "How far, perhaps, they rue it:
"Who made the heart, 'tis he alone
  "Decidedly can try us;
"He knows each chord, its various tone;
  "Each spring, its various bias;
"Then at the balance lets be mute,
  "We never can adjust it;
"What's *done* we partly may compute,
  "But know not what's *resisted*."—BURNS.

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607

THE WARD OF DELAMERE.

CHAP. I.

AFTER the departure of her two friends, Magdalena seldom went to West-hay, and never without a particular invitation. Miss Arlington, in spite of her assumed civility, had for her but few attractions; and she felt that now the circle was so much lessened, and Sir Eustace's attachment was so generally understood, propriety forbade, even had inclination prompted her, to throw herself too much in his way; but this, alas, was far from being the case; for the interest she took in Victoria's unfortunate attachment added another objection to those she before too keenly felt to his addresses. No longer

amused by the lively sensible Henrietta, nor interested by the fair and affectionate Victoria, her mind reverted to recollections, which their presence had enabled her in some measure to banish; and the silence and solitude of Delamere were but too favourable to remembrance.

The hours which she now spent alone were employed in retracing every scene she had passed with Montaubrey and his sister; and the last time she had seen Isabella, gazing on her with

"Hard unkindness' alter'd eye,"

recurred with fresh poignancy to her memory.

Lord Ennersdale, however the conversation began, ended it with pictures of the happiness she would enjoy when Lady Willoughby, and with praises of Sir Eustace, which, though she felt he deserved them, were yet distasteful to her, when connected with his idea as a lover. His assiduities, though she strove to be pleased with them, failed

in exciting any sentiments beyond esteem and gratitude in her heart; perhaps the more, (such is the perversity of human nature) because Lord Ennersdale pointed them out with exaggerated recommendations to her notice. Over him Sir Eustace's influence seemed almost unbounded; what he proposed, the Earl immediately complied with; every book he recommended, Magdalena was instantly requested to read, and as he had always been an admirer of works of imagination, she now eagerly perused pictures of the heart, which but too vividly reflected the feelings of her own, and were the more impressive for having been so sedulously withheld.

Under all these trying circumstances, her health became affected, she drooped, the roses forsook her cheeks, and her eyes revealed the langour which oppressed her. Sir Eustace instantly took the alarm; he besought Lady Piercefield to resume the project which

Victoria's illness had delayed, of visiting the Lakes, and taking Miss Melrose with her, hoping the change of air and scene might relieve her from the weakness and dejection which seemed to hang about her, and of which he had vainly demanded the cause. Magdalena dared not reveal it, but attributed her langour to the effects of a very warm summer, and her want of spirits to the loss of Victoria and Henrietta; yet she sighed at the deception she was compelled to practise, and a pang of remorse invaded her heart when she contemplated the virtues of the man she thus misled.

Lady Piercefield felt but little inclination for the intended tour; her circle had been painfully lessened by the departure of her daughter and Miss Devereux, and she had also been disappointed of seeing some other friends who had promised to join her at West-hay. Matilda was not the most amusing companion in the world, and a partie

quarré with her and the two lovers, as she fancied Sir Eustace and Magdalena to be, amongst the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, was certainly not the most attractive possible scheme; Lord Charles and Captain Burton having left them during the illness of Victoria. Yet to leave the north of England without seeing its lakes, even if Sir Eustace had not earnestly desired it, would, she thought, have been extraordinary, and seemed like a want of taste. She prevailed therefore on Doctor, Mrs. and Miss Parry, being the persons in the neighbourhood she liked best, to accompany them; the Doctor, whose health was shaken by the frequency and anxiety of his professional engagements, being enabled to leave them for awhile by the arrival of a gentleman to whom he meant shortly to relinquish a business which was become so fatiguing for himself.

Fervently, however, did Lady Piercefield wish for the time when these "*journeys in search of the picturesque,*" for which she had but little taste, should be ended, and she returned once more to the style of society to which she was accustomed. Lord Ennersdale declined being of the party, but eagerly consented to Magdalena's going, for whom at his request Lady Piercefield engaged a proper female attendant, and the party set out at the end of the first week in September. The weather was delightful, and after spending a day or two in visiting some of the neighbouring scenes which had before escaped their observation, they crossed to Carlisle, and from thence visited Haweswater, Grasmere, where Sir Eustace and Magdalena read together Charlotte Smith's beautiful description of this lovely lake, Buttermere, &c. They returned by another route to Carlisle, and having been both pleased and benefited by this excursion, they next vi-

sited Corby Castle, Armaithwaite Castle and Nunnery, of which the grounds alone were at that time shewn to strangers.

Magdalena, whose strength was not perfectly returned, though these little excursions had much restored her, was obliged to accept the arm of Sir Eustace, as they passed along the turf walk, by the margin of the Eden, but whose waters, concealed by thick trees, are only heard in their tumultuous passage through a rocky channel. Soon afterwards they reached the spot where the Eden and the Croglin unite their streams, and entered the deep ravine through which the latter throws its waters; proceeding, almost deafened by its roar, they at length came to the cataracts, the second of which impressed them all with awe; the deep cauldron which receives the river after its fall, being almost involved in total darkness. It was nearly evening when they reached it, and the gloom was

consequently more profound; scarcely a ray broke through the over-arching cliffs and solemn shades under which they stood, contemplating the sublime descent of the waters, between rocks which almost meet, into a natural bason of nearly three hundred feet in depth.

Awed, yet delighted, Magdalena involuntarily leaned on Sir Eustace, who drawing her gently towards him, whispered words of tenderness and protection: At this moment two gentlemen, who, like themselves seemed to have visited this sublime scene from motives of curiosity, passed close beside them. So deep was the shadow, that till they almost touched Magdalena, she had not perceived them; but one of them pausing a moment, gazed earnestly on her face; she looked up, startled by his sudden stop, and saw close to her the pale and agitated countenance of Montaubrey. She started, and uttered a faint scream. "What, dearest Magdalena," said Sir Eustace turning at the

sound, "what is the matter?" As he spoke, Montaubrey sternly regarding them both, passed on, and hastily rejoining his friend, plunged into a still darker shade, and remained unrecognized by those of the party who had ever seen him before. Magdalena, pale and trembling, could hardly support herself; Sir Eustace repeated his enquiries, and called to the other ladies, who were at a little distance, to come to her. Lady Piercefield attributed her indisposition to the gloom and chilliness of the place where they stood, and declaring it was dangerous in her opinion to remain there any longer, desired they might return to the open day light. In the mean time, the wild and anxious glances of Magdalena, directed towards the rocky pass by which the strangers had vanished, attracted the attention of Sir Eustace. "Did those men say or do any thing to offend or alarm you, as they passed?" he eagerly enquired. "Nothing, not a word," she re-

plied; and satisfied by the answer, he complied with Lady Piercefield's request, and they left Nunnery immediately. From thence descending into the beautiful vale of Eden, whose pastoral scenes, enlivened by rural dwellings, and distant villages, soothed their spirits, which had all been affected by the tremendous falls of the Croglin, they soon became easy and conversable as usual; all but Magdalena! whose thoughts were rivetted on the pale and angry countenance, which, like a spectre, had glided by her, amid the deep gloom of the rocks and trees at Nunnery.

"Was it not, indeed," she thought, "a fancied form raised by the rapid workings of an imagination, which those awful shades had before impressed? Was it really Montaubrey that I saw? Never before did I—Oh, Reginald! never again may I see that face, those eyes filled with anger against the wretched Magdalena. Has Isabella

infected you too with unkindness? or was it the unfortunate moment in which you saw me leaning, as it must seem, with affectionate confidence on your rival, that raised in your heart conclusions false indeed, but apparently convincing?" The fast approaching evening shaded her from observation, her tears fell unnoticed, and the fatigue of the day accounted for her silence. They slept that night at an old and solitary inn near Kirk Oswald; their accommodations were but indifferent, but they were too much tired to repine.

Lady Piercefield prevailed on all the party to sit down with her to a loo table, except Magdalena, who was really ignorant of any game of chance or skill, and from whom Sir Eustace unwillingly separated himself to oblige his sister.

The room in which they sat was long, and contained a deep casement window in which the card table was placed; at the end farthest from the door was a

sort of arched recess, containing an old fashioned beaufet (or sideboard) and a large casement similar to that in the sitting room, from which probably this recess had formerly been entirely separated by a door, as there was a high step at the entrance. The night was warm, and Magdalena, after walking once or twice up and down the large room, weary, and longing for silence and quiet, retreated to the recess, opened the casement, and leaning out, observed the heavens overspread with clouds; an autumnal breeze soon sprung up, and then passed rapidly away. A few stars were now visible, and the driving rack spreading itself thinly over an early moon, became diversified with various colours; pale yellow, lucid amber, and bright violet alternately tinged the light and fleeting clouds. Magdalena watching those beautiful appearances, and listening to the distant shouts of the husbandmen, who in this northern climate were but now completing their harvest, felt her

spirits become gradually more composed; and her mind more tranquil. . Yet a thousand tender recollections rose in her bosom; how often had she at Delamere watched the appearance of the skies, to decide whether the next day would permit her to meet Montaubrey and his sister! How often standing at the entrance of the now forsaken and neglected alcove, had they together admired the first tremulous stars of evening, or the rising moon which warned them to part, to part but till to-morrow! And now, how often that beautiful planet, "like to a silver bow, new bent in heaven," must return, and they still be separated.

Occupied by these and similar reflections, time wore on; the conversation and laughing of the card players was almost unheard, and quite unheeded, when suddenly two horsemen, attended by a servant, rode up to the inn; as they alighted, Magdalena fancied that the form of one resembled in

height and outline the figure of Montaubrey, and with a quickened motion of the heart she leaned forward to observe them. The landlord came to the door with a light, but the travellers stood within a sort of old fashioned porch talking to him, and were no longer visible from the window where Magdalena stood. Presently a voice to which she was a stranger, called to the servant who had remained holding the horses, "Tom, lead up the horses; we must go on; we cannot be accommodated here." "By heavens," said another voice, "I will not proceed to-night; I am determined to stay here till to-morrow morning." The voice! Oh! now indeed Magdalena could not be mistaken; that was surely the voice of Montaubrey, and her beating heart and trembling frame would not permit her to listen any longer, at least, to distinguish what passed; for she still heard the murmur o. voices in conference or debate, and at length, her perturbation

decreased enough to allow of her hearing the servant say, "But Sir, there is no room for the horses." "I do not care," Montaubrey returned, "then De Morville, you and Tom may go on, but the whole world shall not make me move hence to-night. His companion laughing seemed rallying him on the violence of his determinations; but the dispute ended by the servant's leading the horses round towards the stables, and the stranger went into the house, while Montaubrey, for Montaubrey it certainly was, remained leaning his back against the porch, his arms crossed, his eyes fixed upon the moon; he was so near Magdalena, that she heard him sigh, and murmur to himself a stanza of a little sonnet he had once repeated to her; but the deep old fashioned window in which she stood shaded her from his sight. The door of the room in which Lady Piercefield's party were, now suddenly opened, and a thin veil, which Sir Eustace's care had thrown

round Magdalena's head, when she went to stand at the window, was, by the increased action of the air, blown off, and flying out at the casement, it fell almost close to Montaubrey's feet. Attracted by the sight, he hastily snatched it up, and turning round to see if he could discover the person to whom it belonged, his eyes fell at once on the figure of Magdalena, who transfixed and fascinated by finding herself so near him, had no power to withdraw. Starting with a sudden exclamation, he instantly stood before her, regardless as it should seem, of who might be near to observe his approach. The window where she stood was so high from the ground, that tall as he was, his head alone rose above the heavy stone-work, by which it was surrounded. Eagerly seizing her hand which lay on the ledge of the casement, he said in a low but impressive tone, "Magdalena!—Is it indeed Magdalena? Oh fortunate moment! How for

days, have I watched to find you one instant alone!" Trembling and agitated, Magdalena replied, "Reginald! Oh, do we, do we meet again? But leave me, for heaven's sake, leave me. Think only, should any one come to the window! They are all in the outer room." "I do not care," he replied; "the recess in which you stand, I perceive, conceals you from them. And can the happy Sir Eustace thus leave you? Oh, were Reginald blest and favoured as he is, what amusement, what occupation could divide him from you?" "Speak lower," she answered, "for heaven's sake! They will hear you; Oh, what will they think, if they find me talking to a seeming stranger?" "This restraint is insupportable," he replied; "I entreat, I conjure you to give me ten minutes; the last I shall perhaps ever ask of you. Ah, Magdalena, the last! Have you no friend here in whom you can confide, who will walk out with you for ten minutes?"

"Oh, no; oh, no!" she replied, "have I any where in the whole world, a single being to whom I dare confide, either my cruel situation, or my feelings? Except you, Reginald, and to you I ought no longer to reveal them!" "Can you then," he said, "will you, my ever dearest Magdalena, venture alone to join me." "Impossible," she answered, "impossible, I dare not even think of it."

"My dear Miss Melrose," said Mrs. Parry from the other room, "are you not standing too long at that open window?" "Aye, do Magdalena, come away," cried Lady Piercefield; "you will certainly catch cold." "I will come directly," said Magdalena, motioning to Reginald to leave her, and vainly trying to withdraw from his grasp the hand which he still retained, pressing it alternately to his lips, and to his burning forehead, with uncontroulable emotion. "For heaven's sake, Montaubrey," she said, leaning still

forwarder, to avoid being overheard, "suffer me to leave you. The instant Sir Eustace returns, being now disengaged from the card-table, he will join me at the window; think what must, what will be the consequence!" "To all consequences, as they respect myself, I am totally indifferent! But I cannot bear to see you so uneasy! Oh, how much do you fear offending this happy man!" "Ah, Reginald! how unjust! you know at least in part, how cruelly I am constrained to act as I do; but even you do not know all the motives of my conduct!" "Well, well, I know enough, to be sure they are of the purest kind; though Magdalena, I do not see them in the imperative light they appear to you; but this is no place to contest points of such high importance. Surely you will give me one quarter of an hour of unrestrained conversation, before you go from hence. There is a ruined castle at a short distance. To-morrow—".

"Oh, no, oh, no!" she replied, "too dearly have I already paid for my errors! And *now*, consider how every feeling of prudence, honour, justice, militate against such a renewal of them."

"Chance then," said he, "must, as now, be my friend; I will watch your steps. Good night, my love, good night!—They come!—Adieu, and angels guard you!" She heard Sir Eustace enter the outer room, heard his step approaching the recess, and snatching away her hand, turned from the window, in time to prevent him from observing the retreat of Montaubrey.

Agitated, and almost breathless, she with the utmost difficulty, concealed her excessive emotion; the evening air, and the delight, which in spite of her reason, this transient view of Reginald had excited in her bosom, overspread her cheeks with the brightest carnation flush; her hair, which the evening breeze had disordered, hung in beauti-

ful ringlets over her fair forehead, and shaded the dazzling lustre, this agitating interview had given to her eyes.

> "Her face with youth's pure colour glows,
> So softly blent, yet so distinct;
> Such brilliant white, such rosy tinct,
> The apple-blossom shews.
> And the pure skin, divinely fair,
> Seemed as the sun had spared her ever,
> And wintry storms, and summer air,
> Had touched her never!"*

The whole party thought they had never seen her look so beautiful.

Miss Arlington, whose attention to trifles was always remarkable, observed that the veil which Magdalena had worn to the window was displaced; and said, "Dear Miss Melrose, what have you done with your veil? You had it when you went to the window." "I do not know," answered Magdalena, blushing, for she recollected it had been the signal which led Montaubrey to her; "I rather think,—I believe,—it blew out at the window!" "And you were so

* Blanche, by Miss Mitford.

engaged," said doctor Parry, laughing, "in chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon! that you suffered it to escape very quietly?" "Had you not better make some enquiry for it, my dear," said Lady Piercefield, "was it a handsome one?" "Not very handsome," said Magdalena, growing more and more confused, "Oh, you extravagant girl!" exclaimed Miss Arlington, "why you gave ten guineas for it only a week ago." An enquiry was now set on foot, but no traces of the veil remained; and Magdalena, certain that if it had been purposely conveyed away, the thief was actuated by no common motives, very quietly acquiesced in the loss; and said, she supposed the wind had carried it to some distance. Not so, Miss Arlington; who in proportion, as she was cold and insensible in all matters, which to others are most interesting, was anxious and observing in all trifling events; she was sure somebody must have seen it. Who

were the travellers just arrived? Had they any servants with them? Might not one of their servants have picked it up?

"The travellers," said Sir Eustace, "are undoubtedly gentlemen; one of them is the finest young man, and has the most interesting countenance, and the most commanding figure I ever beheld; he crossed me in the hall just now, when I went to enquire about this veil; and his servant, who with some others, was assuring me he had not seen it, said here is my master, Sir, he has been walking about in the front of the house ever since we came in; had any one picked it up he must have seen them." The gentleman bowed in acquiescence with the remark, and said, "Be assured, Sir, no one has passed the front of the house except myself, for the last half hour;" he bowed again, after fixing on me a look the most penetrating and impressive; so, as I really, Matilda, cannot suspect this very

elegant young man of having stolen the veil, we must concur in Miss Melrose's supposition, that the wind carried it away."

"I am very sorry, quite ashamed," said Magdalena, "to have given so much trouble, about a thing of so little consequence."

"Did you find out, uncle, who these gentlemen were," asked Miss Arlington; "are they travelling for amusement, do you think? Do you know their names?"

"They appear to be like us, travelling to see the country," said Sir Eustace, smiling at her curiosity; "their servant called one of them Mr. de Morville, the other, his master." "His master!" thought Magdalena, "not his Lord; then I suppose Montaubrey is travelling under a feigned name, and relinquishes his title to remain unknown."

The loo table was now broken up, and the servants entered with such a

supper as the little inn afforded, in addition to some cold provision, which, anticipating the accommodations they had found, the party had brought with them. Sir Eustace made some enquiries respecting the lately arrived travellers, and with his usual consideration, asked, whether they were accommodated in a tolerable manner; and with his compliments sent some fruit to their table, enquiring if there were any thing else amongst the articles his servants had brought, which could amend the supper of the strangers. He received in reply, a polite answer of thanks, and that the gentlemen were sufficiently provided.

Doctor Parry, with his usual good humour and urbanity, proposed, that the travellers should be invited to join their party; Matilda, curious to see the fine young man her uncle had described, and not displeased with the well sounding name of De Morville, did not object; Sir Eustace seemed turning the

proposal in his mind, and Magdalena expected every instant, that the invitation would be sent, which yet however, she trusted Montaubrey would have too much prudence to accept; but to her great relief, Lady Piercefield remarked, that it was growing late, and the fatigues of the day would probably incline all parties to retire early, and the idea was relinquished. A partition however only separated the two parties. "Is it indeed possible," thought Magdalena, "that I am only divided from Montaubrey by this slight barrier. How lately did I think that a distance, in my estimation almost immeasurable divided us, and now to be so near, so very near, to hear even the murmur of his voice, and not to be permitted to see, or speak to him! Oh, painful constraint! insupportable trial!" Her fine colour gradually vanished, and her countenance betrayed the heaviness of her heart. Lady Piercefield supposing her to be fatigued, now proposed re-

tiring, to which all the party readily agreed. The three young ladies were to sleep in one chamber, their waiting-maids in a room within theirs; this arrangement had been made, to permit the possibility of accommodating the strangers; and Magdalena felt a pleasure in submitting to every inconvenience, which might assist in securing a resting-place for Montaubrey.

Miss Arlington and Miss Parry, laughed at the odd, and somewhat romantic manner, in which a sort of civil intercourse between two strange parties, had been established at this retired inn; and compared their situation to the scene in Don Quixote, where Cordenio, Ferdinand, Lucinda, Dorothea, the captive, and Zorayda, &c. all happen to meet together. Soon however they ceased to talk, and all was now profoundly still; when suddenly the soft notes of a flute exquisitely played, at some little distance from their window, broke the silence of the night.

Magdalena supposed that the invisible musician was Montaubrey, whom she knew to be a performer on that instrument; and her belief was converted into certainty, by his repeatedly performing a little simple air, which she had once or twice sung to him and Isabella at Delamere. Who can describe the emotions with which she now listened to it. The two other young ladies also recognized the strain, which they had heard Magdalena sing, and praised the taste and expression, with which the *unknown* went through its simple, but pathetic modulations. New conjectures were excited by this little incident; and Miss Parry good-humouredly rallied Magdalena on her silence, and the apparently little concern she took in the interesting stranger, as she affected to call the unseen performer. Having diverted themselves as much as they pleased, unsuspicious of the agitation Magdalena suffered, and the music ceasing, they went to sleep, leav-

ing her a prey to a thousand contending emotions and contradictory wishes. In the morning, when their servants came to assist them in dressing, Miss Arlington's maid said, "Pray, Mem, did you hear the music last night, Mem, after you went to bed?" "Yes," replied Miss Arlington; who, like many other very proud ladies, relaxed occasionally to a little familiar dialogue with Kitty; "yes, I suppose it was one of the strangers we heard of last night." "Yes, Mem, so Mr. Warrender, (Sir Eustace's valet) says; and he says, Mem, that the gentleman who played, was walking about the *winders*, till between two and three o'clock this morning; for Mr. Warrender hearing the music, had a *curosity*, Mem, to see who it was playing; and so, Mem, he looked out of winder, and he saw the young gentleman walking all by moonlight, like, at a little distance, and then he came and walked under these winders; and Mr. Warrender heard his

footsteps hours, a pacing up and down; so Mr. Warrender says, says he, to the two gentlemen's servant, for they have but one; Tom, I find is his name." "Eh bien," said Miss Arlington, "Tom, let it be, but Kitty, if you mean to finish this story before breakfast, let me advise you to make haste." "Oh, it's no great story, Mem, only Mr. Warrender says, that he asked the young man whether his master was ill, or in love, Mem, if you'll please to excuse my jesting." "Indeed, Kitty, I did not know you thought you were jesting, so go on as fast as possible." "Yes, Mem, and so the young man was very civil, and he told Mr. Warrender, that his master had only hired him a fortnight ago at Carlisle, and Mr. de Morville lives, it seems, somewhere in Derbyshire, and he came to Carlisle with his servant to meet Mr. Vallancey; and he sent away his servant, as they were only going to make the tour of the lakes, as they call it, and thought, Mem, one

servant would do." "Very well," said Miss Arlington, affecting indifference and disdain, yet secretly anxious to hear every particular, "a most interesting story, and remarkably well played; so this Mr. Vallancey, (is his name?) was the person who played on the flute last night, was it?" "Yes, Mem, and the servant says, he believes he is in some great grief or trouble, for he generally spends half the night walking about, and playing the flute; and he says, he is the most generous, best tempered gentleman he ever lived with, only sometimes, if he takes it into his head to go any where, or stay any where, nothing can turn him; and last night, he as good as swore, he wouldn't go no farther than this place, though the landlord said there was no beds, nor stabling; only Sir Eustace was so good as to go out and commodate matters, for which he was much obliged to him." "Who?—the gentleman, or the landlord, or Tom?" "All of them,

to be sure, Mem, for the horses was uncommon tired." "And so am I," said Miss Arlington, "but pray, Kitty, have you seen this fine Mr. —— what's his name? Tom's master?" "Oh, yes, Mem," said Kitty, simpering, "I met him on the stairs this morning, and a handsomer, finer looked gentleman, I never sat my eyes on; and so he said, says he, quite polite, 'I'm afraid, Ma'am, I disturbed your young ladies last night with my flute,' and so, Mem, I said, I was quite sure my young lady, who was such a fine player herself, would be quite delighted with such sweet music; and then, Mem, he asked me which was my young lady, and I said, the honourable Miss Arlington, and Jenny here, is Miss Melrose's maid, and for the present waits on Miss Parry too."

"You were really very kind to give him all this intelligence, which doubtless was extremely interesting to him." "Yes, Mem, and so then, Mem, the

gentleman looked hard at Jenny, and asked her if she thought *her* young lady was disturbed, and begged her . . . . . Jenny, why don't you tell Miss Melrose what the gentleman beg'd you?" "Truly, I forgot it," said Jenny, "but he begged me to say, Ma'am, he hoped he had not prevented your resting better than he had done!" "Nonsense," said Miss Arlington, "either he was diverting himself with you silly girls, or very impertinent, to send a message to a stranger. I dare say these fine gentlemen are two adventurers, and only wanted to excite our attention; pray are they gone?" "No, Ma'am, I believe they are at breakfast, and not going immediately."

Magdalena crossed the rambling gallery, and descended the old-fashioned staircase, which led to the parlour, where they had sat the night before with a palpitating heart; Montaubrey, however, did not make his appearance, and immediately after a hasty break-

fast, our travellers proceeded across the country to Newcastle; and in the course of the next three or four days, visited all that was remarkable in its vicinity; thence they proceeded to Bamborough castle, rendered interesting by the invention of the life-boat; and then went on by easy stages towards Berwick, where they intended to cross the Tweed, and visit some picturesque situations in Scotland. Several times in the course of their journey, they caught a glimpse at a distance, of three persons on horseback, who seemed to be pursuing the same route; and whom, concluding to be travellers they had encountered at the insulated inn, in the vale of Eden; some of the party amused themselves, with forming little romances respecting them; and *one* with deep emotion, felt that Montaubrey was indeed watching her steps, in hopes that some fortunate chance might throw her in his way.

Their intention was merely at this

time, to go a few miles into Scotland, and afterwards, as they were now in the first week of October, to return by the shortest road to their respective habitations. One object of their journey was, to accomplish a wish, Magdalena had accidentally expressed, of seeing Ross-glen abbey, which stood on the sea-shore in Berwickshire. Sir Eustace, always anxious to gratify her, though sensible, that a sight of that long deserted mansion, (which since the death of Horatia, had only been inhabited by servants,) would renew many painful remembrances in his mind, immediately consented, and this was to be the ultimate object of their journey.

The whole party felt considerably fatigued when they arrived at Berwick. Magdalena indeed had been kept in such continual anxiety respecting Montaubrey, that her spirits were really quite exhausted. She felt that propriety, reason, and justice, all decidedly forbade their meeting again. Consider-

ing herself, and obviously considered by all around her, as the affianced bride of Sir Eustace, she sedulously avoided being left alone at any of those places, where she had reason to believe, Montaubrey was in the immediate neighbourhood; yet agitated incessantly, by the expectation of beholding him, and the distant glimpses she actually caught from time to time of his figure, she suffered perpetually, the most cruel and contradictory emotions of the heart; encreased by the idea, which incessantly tormented her, of the vexation and grief he would feel, in seeing her avoid him, and the dread that in some transport of indignation and jealousy, he would by indiscreetly seeking her, betray the secret of their former connection.

At Berwick they were to remain two days, and the morning after their arrival, was to be devoted to visiting its castle, noble bridge, and some of its manufactories. On that morning, how-

ever, Miss Arlington was confined with a bad head-ache, and Magdalena fatigued and spiritless, requested to be left with her at the inn, to partake her late breakfast, and rest herself till the middle of the day. No traces of Montaubrey had for two days met her eyes, and she believed, that tired of the fruitless pursuit, he had relinquished it, and returned with his friend into Derbyshire. Lady Piercefield, Sir Eustace, and the rest of the party, with some reluctance, consented to leave the two young ladies; but at length, to Magdalena's unspeakable relief, they were prevailed on to do so, and set out for an excursion of two or three hours. The two ladies-maids also requested permission to go out, as soon as Miss Arlington was risen, with Mr. Warrender for their escort. Miss Arlington, chose to take her breakfast in a little room adjoining her bed-room; and at one o'clock, Magdalena and she were still lounging over it, reading some

newspapers and letters, which had followed them from Cumberland.. One of Magdalena's was from Henrietta Arlington, and gave tolerable accounts of Victoria's health and spirits; and she was perusing it with great attention, when one of the female servants of the inn, came to inform them, their ladyship's footman had sent her to say, that a gentleman requested to speak to Miss Melrose, on business. "To me!" said Magdalena, with unfeigned surprize; "what can any person in this strange place, have to say to me?" "It must be a mistake, child," said Miss Arlington to the maid; "do go back again, and learn the gentleman's name, and what is his business; Miss Melrose can't come down." The maid went, and immediately returning said, that the gentleman who was just arrived, begged the honour of seeing Miss Melrose for a minute, as he had something of hers, which he wished to deliver into her own hands. "I think, Ma'am,"

she added, "the gentleman said it was a veil which you lost some time ago, and he wishes to explain to you, how he came by it."

"I dare say," said Miss Arlington, "it is either that Mr. Vallancey, or Mr. de Morville, that Kitty talked so much about, at the inn near Nunnery; you had better just speak to him, Magdalena; you know you need not stay five minutes; I would go with you, but I am quite en deshabille, and cannot dress till Kitty returns." Magdalena guessed but too readily, that it was Montaubrey, who made a pretence of having found her veil, to obtain an opportunity of speaking to her; and with trembling steps she followed the maid to the room, in which she said the gentleman was. Her conjecture was immediately verified, by the sight of Montaubrey; the maid had opened the door for her, and with an assumed composure, he gave Magdalena her veil, saying, he had found it near the inn where

she lost it; then shutting the door hastily, to exclude the servant, he caught both her hands, exclaiming, "At length, Magdalena, at length, oh, best beloved of my soul, I am permitted to see you, without the odious restraint of curious witnesses, without encountering the maddening sight, of an officious, a hateful rival!" Magdalena, overcome by his vehemence, sunk into a chair; and Montaubrey, throwing himself at her feet, and giving loose to the passionate tenderness of his nature, shed burning tears of anguish over the hands he still held grasped in his own. "Rise, my Lord, for heaven's sake," said she, the moment her voice became audible; "think, should any one open the door, should the servants, should Miss Arlington come in."

"Ah, Magdalena," returned Montaubrey, "is it indeed thus? Is Isabella right, and have you so soon forgotten me? *My Lord.* Cruel girl!—am I no longer your Reginald?—your

Montaubrey? The cold decision with which you obey the dictates of prudence, the ever watchful caution which never leaves you, convince me either that you never loved, or that you have forgotten me!"

"Unkind, unjust Montaubrey," replied Magdalena; but be it so! It is best you should think so, since I must.—Ah!—Yes, I must at least endeavour to obtain that coldness, that indifference of which you accuse me! You know, Montaubrey, the considerations to which I have sacrificed every wish, every affection of my heart; why, why will you render a hard task still more cruel! you know I never can be yours."

She again entreated him to rise; he obeyed, and seating himself by her in a manner somewhat calmer, he said, that he had never for the last month lost sight of her for more than a few hours at a time; that he was determined to know from herself on what terms she stood with Sir Eustace Willoughby;

whether she was absolutely engaged to be his wife, and how soon the hateful contract was to be completed; "tell me all this Magdalena," he added, "and then I shall know on what to resolve." She now detailed to him more fully than she had ever before been enabled to do, the denunciations by which Lord Ennersdale had wrought upon her mind to determine her obedience to his will; and related to him all that had passed with respect to her engagements with Sir Eustace, and when Montaubrey found, that although she considered herself as virtually engaged to him, no absolute promise had passed her lips, joy brightened in his eyes; and convinced by her manner, that Sir Eustace had made no progress in her affections, he now eagerly, and with almost irresistible persuasion, entreated, conjured her to consent to fly with him immediately. "We are now," he said, "in that country, where the laws will, within one hour, confirm you mine, be-

yond the power of fate to part us. Oh, my beloved, consider once more the dreadful life you are preparing for yourself. You do not, you cannot love this man. To the perjury at the altar you must add a life of deceit, a death of concealed anguish. One hour, a moment's resolution, will destroy the fancied chains which bind, with magical influence, the powers of your soul. This moment is our own; the spies which incessantly surround you are absent: Fly with me, Magdalena, and obviate the fatal necessity of sacrificing every hope of happiness, every possibility of being the guileless, the virtuous creature for which nature designed you! Can she be virtuous who takes a false vow? Who perfidiously professes a love she never can feel?" "Oh, Reginald," returned the weeping Magdalena, "torture me not. Can it be possible, that instead of sacrificing, as I imagined, my happiness to virtue, I shall be indeed the guilty thing you speak of?

Oh, no; surely Heaven will enable me to conquer a passion, which, when I am the wife of Sir Eustace, it will indeed be infamous to indulge; and give me power to return his affection, at least, in such a degree as may enable me to ensure his happiness, and not totally destroy my own."

"You hope it, Magdalena? You wish it? Then it is done! When once the wish is formed, its completion is not far off!"

"Oh may I then soon be able to form that wish with truth and sincerity! At present, alas!"—'At present," rejoined Reginald with new animation, "at present, you love me! Consent then, dearest girl, consent to be mine, nor tempt a doubtful chance, which will too certainly terminate in misery!" For an instant she wavered, leaning her face on his shoulder, she ruminated on the powerful arguments he had adduced to gain her consent, her heart but too warmly coinciding with his reasons to persuade

her. Lord Ennersdale at a distance, the terror of his frown no longer before her eyes, his awful denunciations seemed fading from her memory; even the remembrance of Lady Milbank's words, her assertion that Montaubrey's mother never would receive the child of doubt, of supposed dishonour, was scarcely recollected. But suddenly the remembrance of her own voluntary promises, her unbiassed self devotion in the presence of Agnes darted into her mind. Tearing herself from his arms, she exclaimed "I cannot, dare not, will not! To my own heart, as well as to Lord Ennersdale, I have given my solemn promise. My honour, my conscience are engaged, and in that confidence alone he to whom only my obedience is due, has permitted me to leave him. I cannot so basely, so treacherously deceive him. No, Reginald, my fixed, my firm resolve is to listen no longer to your dangerous persuasions, to the deceitful pleadings of

my own heart. Leave me, I conjure you. Let us meet no more, or, if accident should lead us together, we must be as strangers to each other. I must be gone; conjectures the most unfavourable will be excited by my long stay. Let us part at once, and for God's sake, do not again expose yourself and me to a parting so full of agony. Think for me, Montaubrey; consider how much my character must suffer, should the length of this conference with an apparent stranger be known! Should these tears, this agitation which half destroys me, be perceived,—" She rose, and drying her eyes, held out her hand, and said, "Farewell, too dear Montaubrey, once more, farewell, for ever. Do not by your vehemence destroy the little composure I have so hardly attained. Leave me, and may every blessing——" Her voice faltered, she snatched away her hand, and unable to endure the sight of his anguish, she covered her face, and rushed out of the room.

CHAP. IX.

MAGDALENA was fortunate enough to regain her own chamber without encountering any observer; she instantly threw herself on her bed, and drawing the curtains, gave a loose to the anguish which overwhelmed her: she hoped by this means to elude the observation of any one who might be sent in search of her, as it was reasonable to suppose Miss Arlington, surprized by her long absence, would make some enquiry respecting her. Having forced herself so far to consider appearances, she gave way to the long train of distracting reflections which this painful interview had excited, and soon had in a great measure forgotten all but Montaubrey, and the misery of their parting. From this indulgence,

she was however, soon aroused by the entrance of her maid, who came from Miss Arlington to know what was become of her; in reply, Magdalena told her that she had a violent head-ache, and had lain down to endeavour to get rid of it. Shortly after Lady Piercefield returned, and hearing Miss Melrose was indisposed, came with great kindness to know if she could be of any service. Magdalena exerting herself to the utmost, begged her Lady-ship to excuse her from joining the party at dinner. but promised to come to them in the evening, which, as the days were now short, they usually spent altogether at the inn, where they intended to be stationary for the night.

Struggling with a grief which she found indulgence rendered still more acute, and after taking every possible method to efface the traces of her sor-row, Magdalena at tea time rejoined the party, and shading her face as much as she could, sat down in the

least conspicuous part of the room, complaining that the light of the candles affected her eyes, which was indeed very true. Sir Eustace approached her with tender enquiries; his presence renewed in her heart every painful recollection, but exerting her utmost fortitude, she strove to be calm, and at least to restrain the tears which every instant filled her eyes. Miss Arlington now asked her whether they were right in supposing the stranger to be Mr. Vallancey, and whether he had come to deliver her veil. To which with assumed composure, but real confusion, Magdalena ans ered in the affirmative. Matilda asked some more questions, and then entered into a detail of her surprize at Miss Melrose's not returning to her in the morning. "Indeed," she said, "when your absence was so unreasonably prolonged, and on sending to know if you and the stranger were still together, I learned you were not below stairs, I began to think this

knight errant had fairly carried you off. But it seems, you really did stay chatting to him some time; pray, my dear, what did he say to you?" This distressing question, to which Magdalena gave some slight answer, was followed by many others both from Matilda and Margaret Parry, to which she also replied as shortly as possible; they were not however contented, but proceeded to rally her on this strange gentleman's having so particularly requested to see her. "I should not be at all suprized," said Miss Parry, "if this handsome Mr. Vallancey had caught a glimpse of Miss Melrose somewhere on our journey, and had requested to see her, in order to declare his passion."

"Was it so, Magdalena?" said Lady Piercefield, laughing; "come, you may as well tell us the truth; it is hard on you young ladies to have travelled so far without meeting with one adventure; now this would be a very pretty one."

"*The truth!*" thought Magdalena, "alas! It seems to be my fate always to be obliged to conceal it! Ah, Reginald, too justly have you foretold my destiny, "*A life of deceit, a death of concealed anguish;*" and this with a heart which detests disguise, which languishes to be sincere!"

Absorbed in this remembrance, she did not recollect how strange her not answering Lady Piercefield's badinage must appear. Sir Eustace, even in the shade which she had chosen, discovered something in her manner, saw some change in her attitude or countenance which struck him as singular; "Is it not true, Magdalena," he said, "that these apparently wild guesses are not wholly without foundation? If this Mr. Vallancey have really seen you before, that he should have been captivated is not extraordinary. I do not ask you to say more than you think proper, but perhaps, as a friend, you will tell me, if you ever saw him before; if he

really said any thing to you out of the common way. I hope—it was nothing which, as your friend and present guardian, I ought to resent."

While he spoke, Magdalena recollected that he had himself seen the supposed Mr. Vallancey; that he might at some future period meet with him again, and recollect him in Lord Montaubrey, with whom he had also learned from Lady Milbank, she had previously had had some acquaintance. She instantly perceived that should she now elude Sir Eustace's questions, that recognition must mark her evasion as inexcusable deceit, and at once reveal its motives. She took her resolution immediately, and with an extraordinary effort of fortitude, she said as calmly as she could; "I really have such a head-ache, that I cannot reply as I ought to the playful remarks of Lady Piercefield and Miss Parry; neither can I with propriety declare to them, who on seeing this Mr. Vallancey, I

found it really was——it was Lord Montaubrey!" "Lord Montaubrey!" Sir Eustace exclaimed, but in a subdued tone, "how strange! And what can be his motive for travelling under a feigned name?" "Probably," said Magdalena, "to avoid any parade, and to enjoy the beauties of the country, without being obliged to travel with a suite of servants. I had seen him before—at Delamere, where he visited Lord Ennersdale, after having saved him from being drowned. Lord Montaubrey had found my veil near the inn where I lost it, and learning that I was one of Lady Piercefield's party, he determined to deliver it to me at any place where we might accidentally stop together. He does not wish to be known to Doctor and Mrs. Parry, with whom he is slightly acquainted. We had perhaps half an hour's conversation, but I am sure, Sir Eustace, you will not suppose, Lord Mont-

aubrey could say any thing which—any thing improper."

"You have seen him, before, then, Magdalena?" said Sir Eustace; "he is very handsome, and appears amiable. Perhaps——certainly it would not be extraordinary, if——One could not wonder if Miss Parry's conjecture——" He hesitated, paused, and seemed affected by some powerful emotion. What a moment for Magdalena to have revealed the truth. But oh! her promise to Lord Ennersdale, and that still more solemn one she had made to her own heart, to clear her mother's fame. All, all forbade it. "Be contented, Sir Eustace," she said in low and tremulous accents, "to know that Lord Montaubrey never can be more to me than he is at this moment, and with the certainty that I am ready to fulfil every wish you may have formed in favour of one, but too unworthy of your love. Our engagements gave you a title to the confidence I have reposed

in you, respecting my knowledge of the supposed Mr. Vallancey. Pray, spare me any farther conversation, I am not well, and must entreat you to make my excuses to the party, whose amusements I will not interrupt, for my leaving them thus early; good night, Sir Eustace, good night!" "One moment, dearest Magdalena! one moment," said he, gently detaining her. "Oh could you but assure me, that your heart took a share in those engagements to which you so sweetly refer! could I but believe, that neither this Montaubrey, nor any other man, might hope for your preferable favour! But how, unworthy as I am, can I expect it?"

"Ah Sir Eustace!" said Magdalena, "why will you say this? Can you really be unconscious of the transcendant worth of a character like yours?—Once again, I assure you, Montaubrey can never be any thing to me. And now, I entreat you, do not detain me.

To-morrow I shall be better; at least I hope so. Once more, good night!"

With thanks and blessings he now permitted her to leave him; and she retired but half satisfied with herself, or the evasive language she had been obliged to use, in reply to his affectionate enquiries.

A night of deep reflection scarcely enabled her to determine, whether she ought to persist in her present course, or, by revealing all the past to Sir Eustace, induce him to relinquish her entirely. What Montaubrey had said of the life of deception she must hereafter lead, had shocked and staggered her, and little did Sir Eustace deserve to be thus deceived. Had the punishment Lord Ennersdale denounced against herself, been all she had to dread, even the beggary and disgrace he menaced, would not have prevailed on her to become the wife of Willoughby; but disgrace would not attach to her alone; it must be extended to the

disgrace of that dear parent, who, tho' never seen, had engaged her enthusiastic heart in the tenderest bonds of love and veneration. She determined then, not to sacrifice her solemn promises and resolutions at the shrine of passion, but that the sole endeavour of her life should be, to conquer that ill-starred love for Montaubrey, which had hitherto caused her so much misery, and to become as far as possible worthy of being the wife of Sir Eustace. "Let him," she exclaimed, "but spare me the necessity of combating jealous doubts, of replying to penetrating questions, and all will be well. Time, reason, and reflection, will enable me to conquer a passion which I am determined not to indulge; and esteem, confidence, and friendship, shall repay the generous regard of Sir Eustace."

The whole of the next day was passed quietly at Berwick, and the salutary repose revived the exhausted spirits of Magdalena; she studiously avoided all

recurrence to the conversation of the night before, but in obedience to her late determination, she conversed more freely with him, than she had hitherto done; the deep sense of what she owed to him, gave a gentleness and softness to her manner of addressing him, which, though not intended to deceive, had that effect, and never had Sir Eustace felt so warm a hope of ultimately gaining her affections as now. Yet once or twice when the young ladies mentioned, *en badinant*, Miss Melrose's hero, the *gallant and handsome Vallancey*, Sir Eustace's eye was turned upon her, and the blush she could not conceal, he scarcely knew how to construe; but Magdalena's colour varied perpetually, and though at this time, like Marmontel's elegant Ursule, "*les lis de son tient dominoient sur les roses*, yet *a la plus legere emotion de son ame, les roses effacoient les lis.*" So that he was perfectly convinced her blushing was no decisive proof, that their raillery affected her heart.

After remaining at Berwick long enough to recover their fatigue, the party proceeded to the coast of Berwickshire. The country round Berwick is not particularly picturesque, and our travellers hastened towards Ross-glen abbey, for the end of autumn was fast approaching, and they all wished to turn their faces homewards, especially Lady Piercefield, who thought, with some apprehension of the long journey she should have to perform, perhaps in bad weather, even after her arrival at West-hay, where she only meant to remain a short time, and then proceed, first to Clifton, and then to London. Hitherto, however, the weather had been particularly mild and favourable, and bright cloudless days seemed to lengthen a summer, which had been singularly warm and brilliant.

Ross-glen abbey, which they reached, after remaining an hour for refreshment at Eyetown, about three o'clock in the day, struck them on their first ap-

proach, as a grand and picturesque, though gloomy and solemn pile of building. It stood on a rocky peninsula, whose extremity stretched far into the waves of the northern ocean, which at high tides, washed the cliff on which the abbey was built, almost to its foundation. The day on which our travellers arrived, had been gloomy and lowering; black heavy clouds hung over the ocean, and a rough sea-breeze threw up the billows in loud commotion, till they nearly touched the ancient grey walls of the abbey; and the travellers felt the salt spray, as they ascended the steps which led to the outer court or quadrangle, beyond which the carriages could not proceed. From the top of those steps the surrounding country in front of the abbey, spread in rich and magnificent scenery. The side of the building opposite to that, over which the sea had most power, stood on the brink of a precipitous descent, cloathed with firs, through which rough steps

cut in the rock, led to a deep ravine below, where two or three scattered cottages, and a little brook, whose murmurs were now lost in the deafening war of the ocean, added to the romantic diversity of the prospect; a few goats on the crags around, were the only animated objects visible, except the sea-gulls and other birds of the ocean, whose wild screams, as their white plumes gleamed amidst the encreasing gloom, seemed in unison with the scene. Sir Eustace and Magdalena, regardless of the rude blast, which, but for his support, her delicate frame could scarcely have endured, stood some minutes on the steps, gazing on this wild impressive view. Deep sighs broke from his heart, and Magdalena felt the hand which held her's tremble. A thousand painful ideas, contributed to excite a similar emotion in her bosom; her cheek grew pale, and when he turned towards her, that singular paleness, to which the exquisite fairness of her complex-

ion, always gave the appearance of statuary marble, and her long glossy tresses streaming in the wind, which had removed the slight covering of her head, encreased so much her resemblance to her mother, that unable to endure the anguish he felt, tears streamed down Sir Eustace's manly cheek, and he involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh, lost, and ever adored Horatia, dost thou again indeed stand before me, in all thy youthful beauty, in all that angel purity, which even the errors caused by an ill-starred passion, never sullied!" Then pressing his forehead with his hand, he added, "Forgive me, Magdalena; dearest and most cherished of all earthly beings! This place, this scene, revive such bitter remembrances! Oh, how often in our youthful days, have Horatia and Eustace, linked in the ties of fraternal love, descended those rude steps, my only care to preserve her from injury, my only wish to promote her pleasure. How often in yonder glen,

by the side of that little stream, have I brought her the first blossoms of the spring, the first wild strawberries from the wood beyond; rewarded, richly rewarded, by her approving smile, by a song from the most harmonious voice in the world, by permission to be her partner in the evening dance! For then, Magdalena, this now desolate and forsaken pile, was the favourite residence of her father, and our summer vacations we always spent here, frequently with several of our school companions. Yonder cottage, is the abode of old Mabel Grey, (if indeed she is yet alive) who was the nurse of Horatia's mother. Often did we visit her, gladly regale on the simple dainties she prepared for us, and which we preferred to the sumptuous repast every day afforded! Poor old Mabel, to-morrow I will seek her.

"But, Magdalena, I detain you too long; the breeze is too keen for that fragile form, and I rend your gentle

bosom, as well as my own, by these affecting recollections!"

They now entered the abbey, into which the rest of the party had preceded them. The walls bare, and dismantled of the pictures and tapestry, which used to adorn them, but which had now been removed to Delamere; the chilling coldness of apartments so long uninhabited, and which the rushing of the heavy gale, rendered still more desolate, struck them with dismay. "For heaven's sake," said Lady Piercefield, observing the pale and altered countenances of her brother and Magdalena; "do not let us stay here long, this place is not good for any of us."

The only persons in the house were two old Scotch servants, and their daughter, a healthy, lively, young woman, who gladly undertook to shew the travellers the house; telling them in her rude dialect, which, all but Sir Eustace, with difficulty understood,

that most of the pictures and fine furniture had been removed, but that there were still some statues, and remains of antiquity, worth their notice. They followed her through the long and narrow passages, (lighted only by high pointed windows) which wound round the side of the building, most distant from the sea, whose roar, diminished by the thickness of the walls, did not now prevent them from hearing the echo of their footsteps, as in gloomy silence they passed along. They visited several immense, but cheerless apartments; Sir Eustace wrapped in silent recollection, Magdalena oppressed by awe and sorrow, and the rest of the party spiritless, and chilled by the gloomy aspect of all around them.

Their guide gave them, in the best manner she could, a short account of each remaining piece of ancient magnificence, of every fading and fast decaying portrait, which were chiefly those of the family of Horatia's mother, whose

maiden name was Alanson, and from whom the abbey, came into the possession of its present owner.

At length they came to those apartments, which their guide said, and Sir Eustace knew, were the usual sitting rooms of her lord and his family, when they were there; "but he had not been there," she said, "for many years, never since his only daughter ran away with a gentleman, and died soon after, at some fine place he had on the other side of the Tweed."

Sir Eustace, unable to bear the tale, and not enduring that Magdalena's feelings on the subject should be exposed to the cold gaze of the insensible Matilda, nor indeed to any eyes but those of sympathy and affection, drew her gently away, and in his own energetic and affecting language, explained the various interesting objects by which they were surrounded. Passing through a short passage, which led from what their guide informed them was the great

dining-room, he opened a door, and said, "Here, Magdalena, is the apartment which Horatia most loved; where she usually sat at her work, or other employments."

It was a small room, with an arched window, which commanded a fine view of the surrounding country, and from which, the eye caught a glimpse of the glen, in which stood the cottage of old Mabel, and of the little rill. The clouds low hung and black, or rolling in misty volumes down the sides of the hills, obscured those grand mountains, which in fine weather, Sir Eustace said, formed a noble back-ground to the view, and the gloom encreased so fast, that even at this early hour, the shades of night seemed approaching.

As they gazed around with silent awe, several little memorials of the lost Horatia met their eyes; a small bookshelf, containing a few volumes, long disused and covered with dust, a little work-table, and small ornamented work-

basket, which appeared to be standing as they had been last used, attracted the attention of Magdalena; while Sir Eustace, leaning against the marble chimney-piece, covered his face with his hands, and seemed struggling with insupportable emotion.

A sentiment more powerful than curiosity, prompted Magdalena to untie, and lift up the lid of the little work-basket; the contents of which had remained untouched, since the hand of her mother, now cold in death, had placed them there. The first thing which she perceived, was an infant's cap, unfinished; but of which, the ornamental work was completed, with the most elegant nicety. At this tender, this affecting memorial of her departed parent, that parent whom she had never known, but who it appeared, had soothed her sad captivity, by preparing for the birth of her infant, Magdalena's tears fell in torrents, and gently touching the arm of Sir Eustace, she

with difficulty articulated, "Ah, see Sir Eustace, my mother's work, and for me!" He turned, and passing one arm round her waist, drew her gently towards him, and as she wept upon his shoulder, his tears fell upon her cheek. Magdalena felt, as if a father's sacred arm supported her, and the purity of angels might have witnessed without a blush, every emotion of the heart of Willoughby! A moment passed, and then hearing the approach of footsteps, Magdalena softly withdrew from his surrounding arm, and Lady Piercefield entered the room. "For heaven's sake, brother," she said, "let us leave this dismal place; night seems approaching before its time, and the distant lightning foretells a tremendous storm; if we stay here longer, we shall not be able to go at all! Hark! is not that thunder, which mingles with the roaring of the sea, and the howling of the wind. Let us go, dear Sir Eustace, let us go."

Sir Eustace saw, with how much reason she apprehended an approaching storm, and drawing her arm through one of his, while Magdalena took the other, they hastily left the abbey; but before they reached their carriages, the rain fell in torrents, and the sheeted lightning, gleaming over the vast expanse of waters, illuminated each dark and curling billow, with its momentary light. The scene was awful, even to horror. It was impossible to proceed farther than a little fishing town, or rather village, not more than a quarter of a mile from Ross-glen; there they gladly took refuge, and as the storm continued to rage with unabated violence for many hours, they willingly contented themselves with such poor accommodations as the place afforded. All but Miss Arlington, who when Sir Eustace did not hear her, vented her spleen in half speeches, on the absurdity of going to such out of the way places; and the folly of *fine sentimental*

people, who travelled in pilgrimage, to see the deplorable remains of departed magnificence, and to grieve themselves, and annoy others, by their romantic conduct. Magdalena heard her with perfect indifference, and as she met with little encouragement from any one, she became silent, and retired to her humble bed-room at a very early hour; renewing, however, her murmurs, at the insupportable inconvenience of being without her femme de chambre, who with Magdalena's maid, and some other of the servants, had been left at Eyetown, when the party set out for Ross-glen.

CHAP. III.

THE violence of the storm at length subsided, though a restling breeze and sudden showers, at intervals broke the

silence of the night. Magdalena's mind deeply occupied, prevented her from sleeping; she retraced all the circumstances of the preceding evening, and fancy again pictured the long passages and desolate apartments, of Ross-glen abbey, and above all, the little work-room, and the affecting memorials it contained of her unfortunate mother. Connected with the remembrance of her fate, and of the destiny which seemed entailed upon herself, came also the idea of Montaubrey; at length the various workings of her mind, formed themselves into the following

SONNET.

Extended darkness spreads her sable veil,
And the hush'd world, lies sunk in calm repose,
Save where, responsive to the sighing gale,
The weary heart, recalls its treasured woes!

Save where, to melancholy thought resigned,
The mourner listens to the howling blast;
And mem'ry waking in the wounded mind,
Recalls each trace of days for ever past.

Ah, painful contrast to this dreary hour,
When thus I wake to darkness and to pain!
How sad to listen to the frequent shower,
And think of those we ne'er shall see again!

Come, gentle sleep, thou only can'st restore,
The image of those days which shall return no more.

Towards morning the showers and rough gale passed away, and Magdalena was awakened from her transient slumber by the rays of a bright sun, shining into the uncurtained window of her little apartment. She rose instantly, anxious to execute a scheme which she had planned during her wakeful hours. On looking from her casement, she saw the sea at a little distance, in that state of pleasing agitation which follows a tempest; the waves breaking lightly against the shore, and every curling top, gemmed by the sun's rays with a thousand scattered diamond-like points. It had just sufficient motion to prevent an uninteresting calm, and the animation of the scene was heightened, by various little fishing-boats,

which were just pulling off from shore, while the wives and children of the owners, stood on the pebbly beach to see them depart, or assisted in putting on board the nets and other articles necessary for their business. The fresh sea-breeze, and this chearful scene, seemed to inspire Magdalena with new life; it was yet early, and she knew none of her party were risen; she determined therefore to go immediately, and alone, to the cottage of Mabel Grey; where, if she did not find the poor old woman yet alive, she doubted not she should be able to trace some of her descendants, and to leave with them, acceptable marks of her remembrance of her mother's ancient friend. The paths she concluded would be wet and dirty, but Henrietta Arlington had taught her to despise trifling inconveniences, and to equip herself properly for a walk. Descending softly the narrow staircase, she easily found a guide, and learned at once, that Mabel Grey was still alive,

and in full possession of all her faculties, though a rheumatic lameness prevented her from going abroad. Her daughter, she found, was married to one of the fishermen belonging to this little village, and a grand-daughter, about seventeen, was her only companion. A Scotch lass, active and sprightly, undertook to shew Magdalena the way, and unincumbered by shoes or stockings, stepped briskly forward, leading her by a winding path, under the brow of the hill, where the inn and village stood, through a narrow rocky way, which brought them into the bosom of the little glen where Mabel's cottage stood. The precipice on which the abbey stood rose abruptly from the side of their path, and, on looking up, Magdalena saw its grey walls, and pointed arches hanging over them in gothic magnificence. The cottage of Mabel stood at the foot of another rocky crag, which stretched away into the sea, leaving only a rough and nar-

row defile between itself and the eminence on which the abbey was built. Firs, and the weeping birch, with some creeping plants, clothed in some places these romantic mountains; while in others, broad masses of scarred rocks, perfectly bare or stained, with small mosses and lichens, diversified the scenery. Here and there little rills descended, as clear as chrystal, into the brook which wound through the glen.

With a palpitating heart Magdalena knocked at the door of Mabel Grey; a voice somewhat shrill, but not discordant, in the northern accent, replied, "Come in." Magdalena, requesting her guide to sit down on a rough seat at the door, and wait for her, obeyed. An old woman, whose hair, as white as snow, rested in primeval simplicity on her forehead, and shaded a pair of still penetrating eyes, was sitting at her wheel, in an old-fashioned high-backed chair; her cheeks were pale, and her whole form somewhat spare and ema-

ciated; but there was a striking character of good sense and piety in every lineament of her countenance. On a little table, at her side, lay a large open bible, and a sort of cushioned stool at her feet, shewed that she had not long risen from her morning devotions, though to kneel, or rise without help, was not in her power. Her dress was a blue cloth gown; her cap, apron, and kerchief, of unspotted whiteness; while her apartment, and every article it contained, (of which, within a kind of recess, her little bed was one,) was a pattern of neatness and order. Her appearance reminded Magdalena of that most just and accurate delineation from nature, (though perhaps the character exists no longer,) Shenstone's schoolmistress. As Magdalena entered, she bowed her head, and begged to be excused for not rising, adding, in the Scotch accent, but with great purity of expression, that she was lame, but should be glad to receive any com-

mands the young lady would favour her with. Magdalena had drawn her veil and bonnet over her face, that her resemblance to her mother might not be observed, being undetermined whether or not to avow herself. In a low voice and faltering accents, she begged permission to rest awhile, adding, that not being accustomed to the rocky paths of Scotland, she had somewhat fatigued herself in her morning ramble. At the sound of her voice the old woman leaned her head a little forward, as if to hear more distinctly, and fixing on her young guest an enquiring glance, begged she would be seated, adding, "Ye are frae the south I ken, and gude truth ye dinna seem fit to encounter ony rugged paths, ither for yere feet or yere heart. Yere voice, and what little I can descrie under yere head gear o'yere bonnie face, are like tull ain wha was mair used tull our rough paths, an, alas! to heavy and rugged trials through life! May ye, fair lass, enjoy a happier lot!"

Magdalena sighed, and gazed with wistful earnestness on every thing about her. "Your name," she said, "is, I am told, Mabel Grey; have you been long lame?" "What is the voice I hear?" cried the good woman, "gude troth ye gar me tremble!—Surely it is the varra voice of my ain dear child! Nay, forgi' me, dear young lady, I am old and foolish. I ken fu' well, ye canna be the bonnie dearling o' my heart, wha has been in the cauld grave these mony years, yet the varra likeness o' her puts me aw untul an ageetation!"

"May I not know," said Magdalena, stifling her emotion, "who is this darling whom you so tenderly lament?" "Alass!" replied Mabel, "why shud I tawk aboot her! She was fair, she was guid, she was the joy an pride o' my auld heart! She was the ainly daughter o' my foster child, an o' our laird; her dear mither died while she was a wee thing, and fer her sake she

always loved me, and often she wad visit her puir auld Mabel, and leave her father's halls to sit an read to me! But ah! she is gane, and I can ainly greet and lament the sad loss I had o' her!"

While she was yet speaking, Magdalena's eyes caught sight of a little frame of carved wood, which hung on the wall close by her; it was evidently formed by some rude artist, and, within its circle, and secured from injury by a glass, she saw two cyphers. They were the very same, only on an enlarged scale, as those on the cover of her mother's tablets, and the little wreath which surrounded them was of a similar form. The initials were H. D. and D. O. Magdalena rose to examine them more nearly, and Mabel observing her said, "Ah, ye look on a token which I ha presarved monie years! it was the work of an unfortunate gentleman, the luver, nay, I know not, perhaps the husband, of my dearling Hora-

tia!" "His work!" exclaimed Magdalena, "Ah, then you knew him!" "Ah, what is the cause o' yere surprise!" said Mabel, "nay, surely, I am reight, an ye tak an interest in this matter for some guid reason. Wull ye not tell me, my bonnie chield, for why ye greet an weep when ye look upon that little cypher?" "Oh, yes!" said Magdalena, "I will tell you, my good Mabel; but first inform me what you know of the person who formed those cyphers." "That I wull," replied Mabel, "for my mind misgies me that ye ha a reight to enquire. Well then, my dear young lady, ye must knaw that my chield, fer sa, after her mither's death, I caw'd Miss Delamere, fer that was her name, was betrothed to as fine and as gude a young mon as e'er drew breath; aften wad they come hand in hand to my wee cot, or sit on the burnside when the weather was fine, and seem sa content and sa weel pleased, that we thought they were formed by

the hand of nature each for ither, but, alass! my young ladie chanced tull see anether, whom she prefarred tull Sir Eustace, and whan my auld laird found out that she was troth plight, or as good, tull the stranger, he was in sic a rage, that he had well nigh killed his daughter! He shut her up intul a close prison, in yon abbey, but she made her escape with her luver, and they were na o'erta'en tull several days after: the auld laird forced her awa, while his sarvants held the puir youth, wha was perhaps her husband, and brought her again tull yon abbey, where her confinement was closer than ever; and sad, sad tales were whispered, that her father reviled her in every bitter term, and laid his heavy curse upon the youth she luved, whom he sware she should never see again.

"It was on a dark an stormy evening that a stranger came tull our wee cot, and prayed to be admitted for a few nights; my guid mon, wha then was

iving, never denied the stranger and the houseless room to rest; but this we weel discerned was na beggar; he was the handsamest lad that ever the sun shone upon, and, to judge by his mien, he might ha been a prince, but he was opprast by melancholic thoughts, and rarely spake or smiled, but if the gambols of our leetle Kattie, our grand-daughter, ere garred him smile, oh, it was like the sun-beam which darts fra the wintry cloud, and leghts up aw around! He staid with us and partook our humble fare for a fortnight; we speered to know his name an degree, but with curtesy he declined to answer, an his name we never knew, but we could not but guess he was the luver o' our puir young ladie.

"He never stirred from hame (as he called our cot) by day, but when the night came on, he wrapped a plaid around him, and till the morning dawn he wad na return: once my guid mon watched his steps, and saw him as-

cending yon craggy point, which juts fra the rock o'er which that little corner of the abbey hangs, that was said to be the place where our dear young ladie was shut up. But, alas! when there he could na see nor speak to her, for the art nor wit o' man could never reach the little arched window so high abuve. I believe, however, the luvers contrived to write tull each other, for we sometimes saw our guest reading letters and writing, and sometimes he employed himself in making little drafts of the rock an the abbey, or of some weed or flower, and, amongst ither things, he drew those cyphers, which, to presarve, my grandson made that little frame.

"At last he went fra our cot, as usual, at night fall, and we left the door upon the latch, that he might return when he pleased; poortith fears na robbery. I rose by times, and trimmed up the ingle-side, and lighted the ingle tul order our simple breakfast, looking

every instant when our guest wad descend 'fra his little chamber abuve; for tho' so late to rest, he was an early riser. Ah! methinks I see him now, wi' his brown clustering locks abuve his bonnie brow, an those bright dark grey eyn, wi' the saft or lively smile o' his winsome mou, saying to me, 'That is aw right, my good Mabel, au is weel, au is gude eneugh for me!' Sa contented an sa easy, yet wi' a look o' deep grief an care upon his open forehead! Ah, troth I canna but greet tul think upon him!" And she wiped away the tears from her eyes, while Magdalena's fell softly down her cheeks. "Ah weel! it boots na to complain, or to think o' the days lang syne departed!" continued Mabel. "I watched an waited in vain, our bra guest returned na mair!—But, ah well-a-day! how shall I end my sad tale? We speered high an low, an prayed every neebor, gin they could to tell us aught o' the bonnie gentleman; an ah, waes me! we learned at the last, fra a

puir fisherman, wha plied his trade off the rocks below the abbey, that at early dawn, as he went to his wark on the morn our guest was missing, he found the plaid in which he used to wrap himself, on the steep rock yonder (look out, sweet Miss, an ye may see the very spot), and —— Lord my aged heart shrinks to think upon his hap! the plaid was dyed in bluid, an au the rock fra that place to the very water's edge, was drapped wi huge bluid draps! —Ah God! these were heavy thoughts at that time! Lord keep us aw fra the evil o' pride an malice! Yet surely it could na be!—But, ah!" she screamed, "what ails ye, Miss? Ah, I canna rise to help her, an she's fainted dead away!—Ah Elspa, help!"

The rustic guide from the inn rushed in at the sound of her voice, and half raised the apparently dying Magdalena from the floor; her veil and bonnet were fallen off, and the bright chesnut locks upon her forehead, and that mar-

ble-like paleness, turned poor old Mabel almost into stone! Slowly, painfully, the heart-struck girl revived, and found herself with her head resting on the knee of the good old dame, who, bending over her, was bathing her face with fast falling tears. "Ah child, ah my dear child!" she cried, "surely ye are come again to yere poor auld Mabel! An where ha ye hidden so lang, when they tauld me the cauld grave had covered ye?—Yet here I see ye, as young an fair as when ye used to come to my puir cot, so lang syne!" "Ah, Mabel! dear Mabel!" said Magdalena, stretching out her arms to the poor old woman, whose senses seemed bewildered with surprise, "recollect yourself! I am not your child, not your own, your very own Horatia!——Send away the girl," she added, in a low tone of voice, and raising herself, "we want no witnesses of our conversation."—"Gang out tull the door, wull ye," said Mabel, "and speer if Elspa is coming;

I ha' to say wi' the young Miss, an ye munna hear our tawking!" The girl readily obeyed, and then Magdalena, throwing her arms round old Mabel's neck, with many a tender caress, and many a tear, explained to her the relationship in which she stood to her lamented Horatia, and most probably to her unfortunate guest. "Ah yes!" exclaimed Mabel, "there is na doubt ye are the child o' that handsome, but unfortunate pair. Ye ha' the voice, the eyes, the hair, an the fair, fair skin o' my Horatia! but your mou' an that little dimpled chin, an soft round cheek, are those of our poor dear gentleman! Oh ye are sa like the baith, that I wad swear tul ye in any court o' law! An what, what is become o' my auld laird, an theysay he is a real laird now? is he alive yet, an does he own ye fer his flesh an bluid?———An I never knew, nor so much as guessed, that my ain dear child was a mither! Ah! mickel were her waes, an salt were the tears,

na doubt, in which she baptized her poor baby!" At this tender, this affecting image, the eyes of Magdalena again overflowed, nor were those of Mabel dry. "Alas!" she exclaimed, "I never thought to shed sa monie tears o' lave again, yet it joys my aged heart to see the sweet image o' my dear child again; ah, it was kind, and like yere dear mither, to come an see auld Mabel!"

She now enquired again for Lord Ennersdale, and learnt with indignation, that though he confessed Magdalena was his grand-daughter, he yet would not acknowledge her legitimacy, except on certain conditions, which she did explain. "Ah, wae betide him," said old Mabel, "would he blast the fame of his ain sweet an vertuous daughter! Ah, she was o' the bluid of Allanson, her mither descended fra that family, and nane but vertuous women e'er came of it yet; and wad he pretend, my ain modest an pious Horatia, was nat a

married wife, though she was a mither? Ah, Miss, ye need na fear, ye are na the child o' dishonour! Ah, wae tul him, that tore yere mither fra her husband's arms, and wad now stamp her memory wi' doubt an shame! Ah, now I can believe he was the cause o' that sad end; but na, na, sure one o' his bluid, could na be guilty of sic a fowl deed!" "Oh no, impossible," sighed Magdalena, "of that I am certain he must be innocent; he has protected my helpless infancy, and if I am obedient, will in time remove the cloud which hangs over my birth." "Obedient!" replied Mabel, with quickness; "ah, too well I ken! he will revenge on you the errors of your poor mither, an gi ye no choice in a wedded lord. But who is here? Sure my head is bewildered, or have I really seen that face before?" she cried, as Sir Eustace crossed the threshold, and seeing Magdalena, stopped with some surprize, exclaiming, "Magdalena! I did not

think to find you here! "Ah, I see by those tearful eyes, that disordered air, you have been too tenderly affected by the meeting with this good old woman! Mabel," he added, "do you remember me?" "Troth yes, I think so," replied the old woman, "but Lord ha' marcy on me, surely I am in a dream, or ha a vision! Is it really your honour, for I know your face again, but more than aw, I recollect your voice."

He now more fully explained himself, and Mabel was convinced it was indeed her old friend, Sir Eustace Willoughby, she saw before her. She remarked to him, yet half fearfully, as if she dreaded to revive painful recollections, the likeness of Magdalena to her mother, and seemed to see with pleasure the kind tenderness with which he treated her. "Ah, Miss," she said, "ye need na sa much regret the loss of yere ain father, sin Sir Eustace lives to protect ye! He will see justice done tull ye, I know fu well, an act to ye as a

kind father tul his ain child! Ah, Sir, ye were ill-used, an it was the ainly fault my dear young lady was ever guilty of, but ye will not resent it tul the innocent orphan! An yere years an gudeness make ye a meet protector for this lovely creature."

Sir Eustace's cheek was covered with a crimson flush, and Magdalena bent her eyes on the ground, that she might not seem to observe it.

The morning was rapidly advancing, and Sir Eustace knew that Lady Piercefield, and the rest of the party, would be impatient to leave their inconvenient lodgings; he therefore hinted to Magdalena, the necessity of leaving their good old friend, to whom, with many kind words, she now bade farewell, promising, if it were possible, to see her again.

"Ah, the gudeness o' gudeness, bless an presarve ye," said old Mabel, "but yestreen I thought I was ready for my grave, and to close my aged eyne, which

had seen sa meckle evil befa' the best an fairest; but now I wad live a little longer, that I may behold ye fair young lady, the heir to aw this brave estate, an married tul some great laird, which shall be worthy of ye. Has yere honour na son, na fine kinsman, to whom my auld laird will gi' this bonnie blossom?" "I trust," said Sir Eustace, with some confusion, "that many months will not pass, Mabel, before . . . . we shall meet again; in the mean time farewell, and God bless you." He put a valuable token of his regard into her hand, which she would have declined, but he insisted on her taking it; and Magdalena added, what seemed still more estimable in Mabel's eyes, a kind and affectionate caress, while a soft tear dropped on the venerable cheek of the good old woman, whose thanks, praises, and blessings, were audible, till the cottage door had closed upon them.

Sir Eustace drew Magdalena's hand

through his arm, dismissing the guide who had accompanied her, and saying he would himself shew her the way to the village. In silence they proceeded; he led her through the narrow defile, which wound under the abbey, and beneath the jutting crag which Mabel had pointed out as the path by which her unfortunate father had sought his imprisoned wife. It was now low water, and they passed under those cliffs, which, but the evening before, had been washed by the stormy and tumultuous billows. The sea, calm and resplendent, was enlivened by many white sails, and every thing presented images of soft, yet animated repose. As they passed the rock, which Mabel had pointed out as the probable death-place of her father, Magdalena's frame shuddered with strong emotion, and a pallid hue stole over the cheek of Sir Eustace, for he too, it was probable, had heard the sad, the horrible tale. "Ah, Magdalena," he said, "I see by that agi-

tated countenance, that our humble friend has been but too communicative. The real truth of her mysterious story, (which she related to me, when I visited Ross-glen, just before Lord Ennersdale left it,) has never been ascertained. But ah, my lovely friend, let us beware how we judge a fellow creature! However warped by pride, or impelled by passion, he was not capable—. Months I watched him, in those tumultuous hours of delirium, when the soul throws off all disguise, and the feelings of the wretched or the guilty, are involuntarily disclosed. Such a deed must then have presented itself, to a mind, whose remorse for cruelty to a daughter, never slept! But, no! he never breathed a word that could refer to it. Let us say no more; I think I even injure him by supposing any defence on that score necessary. Do not suffer that pure, that ingenuous mind to be poisoned. Whatever caused that sad catastrophe, those who claim your love and duty,

were surely innocent." Most firmly I believe it," said Magdalena; "my heart cannot conceive a possibility of guilt so horrible! Let us drop the dreadful subject!"

Amongst the rocks, between which they passed, lay many deep caverns, which in ancient times, Sir Eustace said, had been the resort of banditti; into one near the fatal rock, from which Magdalena's heart recoiled, curiosity led her to request they might enter; Sir Eustace consented, and they proceeded an hundred yards, lighted only from a fissure in the top of the cavern, from which depended long strings of creeping plants, while on every side the water dripped, making a low, trickling, and almost musical sound. A natural arch, too low to admit of their passing it without difficulty, impeded their progress, and on it many indistinct, but deeply cut characters were engraved. On approaching nearer, Magdalena distinguished amongst them,

the same cyphers which had excited so much interest in her bosom, when she first saw them on her mother's tablets, and again in the cottage of Mabel Grey. "Ah, see, Sir Eustace," she said, "he has been here also!" Sir Eustace started; he also examined the cyphers, and in a low voice articulated, "Poor ill-fated youth!" He then asked Magdalena, how she knew their import. Composing herself as well as she could, and suffering him gently to lead her from those distressing scenes, she told him, as they walked towards the inn, the accident which had led her to her mother's chamber at Delamere, and shewed him the tablets, which she always carried about her, and which, with a tear, he immediately recognized. This confidential intercourse, and the sympathetic emotions of their hearts, still more endeared them to each other; but Magdalena still felt, that in spite of her efforts, Sir Eustace was to her as a father, while he seemed every instant

more passionately attached to her, and more desirous of obtaining a degree of affection, which should render him acceptable as a lover, in the eyes of Magdalena.

CHAP. IV.

IMMEDIATELY after the return of Magdalena and Sir Eustace, the party, who were somewhat impatiently waiting for them, set out, and proceeding to Eyetown, took up the servants, and with all imaginable speed, returned by a new route to Carlisle; from whence Lady Piercefield conducted Magdalena to Delamere castle, and then proceeded to West-hay; whence, after remaining a week or ten days, they were all to go to Clifton. Magdalena found Lord Ennersdale perfectly well, but confessing, with unusual kindness,

that he had missed her very painfully; she readily offered to decline the London excursion, but always anxious for her being as much as possible with Sir Eustace, he insisted on her fulfilling her engagement.

Magdalena was struck by the alteration which so short a time had made in Mrs. Dennis; she was extremely weak, and her complaints had so much gained ground upon her, that her pupil insisted on sending immediately for doctor Parry. The poor woman no longer lamented the dull monotony of her life, but seemed perfectly contented to spend her hours in calm seclusion and devotional reading; though always pleased to have Magdalena with her, she yet, with kind consideration, would not allow her to devote so much time as she wished to do, to nursing and attending her. Doctor Parry saw immediately that all was over, and that skill could do nothing to renovate a constitution totally worn out. Magda-

lena rejoiced that she had returned in time, to soothe and comfort her declining hours, and with the softest attention anticipated her every wish. So rapid was her decay, that in ten days after Magdalena's return, she breathed her last, embalmed by the grateful tears of her to whom she had devoted so large a portion of her blameless life, and attended by the respectful concern even of Lord Ennersdale, while the old servants, towards whom she had ever conducted herself with prudence and conciliation, spoke of her in terms of sincere regard and sorrow.

Lord Ennersdale paid her memory the compliment of putting himself, Magdalena, and all his household into mourning, and ordered that she should be laid in the family burial-place; but no entreaties could induce him to permit Magdalena to follow her corpse to that hallowed spot, nor would he suffer any one, but Mr. Malcolm, Agnes, Judith, and the attendants indispensa-

bly necessary, to enter the cemetery. He directed that the funeral should take place early in the morning, and with as much privacy as possible; he then forbade any more applications to him on the subject, and seemed to wish to remain ignorant of the exact time when the resting-place of Horatia should be exposed to the eyes either of curiosity or affectionate remembrance.

This event, and the agitating scenes she had passed in her late tour, seemed to have a strong effect on the health and spirits of Magdalena; and Lord Ennersdale and Sir Eustace, alarmed by her languor and dejection, most gladly heard Lady Piercefield say, she only waited for her to begin her journey. They urged Magdalena to complete her preparations, and seemed to her almost cruel, in the eagerness with which they forced her from Delamere, where her weary mind and exhausted spirits would gladly have remained, and which at that time she thought the

only asylum where she could hope for tranquillity and peace.

"To the heart by woe subdued,
An unmixed joy is solitude!
'Tis bliss to 'scape the asking eye
Of vacant curiosity;
The scornful sneer, the pity loud,
The comfort of the babbling crowd,
The officious, forward, vain caress;
From these to 'scape is happiness!"*

This species of felicity she was, however, obliged to relinquish, and the third week in November was fixed for their journey. Lady Piercefield, Miss Arlington, Magdalena, and Sir Eustace, were to travel in Lady Piercefield's barouche, followed by the ladies' maids and Mr. Warrender in a travelling coach, and attended of course by a numerous train of out-riders, &c.

Lord Ennersdale supplied his granddaughter in the most liberal manner with money, telling her to purchase every thing, no matter at what expence, which would enable her to appear as

* Blanche.

became the friend of Lady Piercefield, and as his *ward and relation*. "As such, Magdalena," he added, "I wish you to be recognized; but beware that you do not explain to any one, more than is already known, of the degree of relationship in which we stand to each other. My resolutions are not in the least shaken, nor my watchfulness laid asleep, by your present conditional engagements with Sir Eustace; while you act consistently with them, and with my will, you may depend on every kindness from me; but if you seek to deviate from the plan I have laid down; if you suffer yourself to be misled, either by passion or artifice, my vengeance shall still fall heavily upon you! Think not because I am distant, I may be deceived; long as I have been absent from the metropolis, I have still friends there, who at my request, will keep an eye upon you. Even should Sir Eustace himself now refuse to fulfil your engagements, that shall not save

you from my resentment; I know he can have no wish to do so, unless you excite one in his mind by some improper confidence, or change of conduct; I equally forbid either! And should you again meet Lord Montaubrey . . ."

"Cease, my Lord," said Magdalena, "oh, cease to caution, or to threaten! My resolution is taken! I have already proved its stability. To me, Montaubrey can now be nothing. I have sacrificed him, I have denied to his most ardent entreaties, the relinquishment of my purpose, and persisted in my obedience to your will, even in opposition to his determined pursuit, his most persuasive remonstrances; judge then if you need to watch, to suspect me!"

"How! when! where was all this?" exclaimed the astonished earl, "is it possible, that surrounded as you have lately been, he can have gained access to you?" "It is possible, it is certain," replied Magdalena; "one hour from that in which we met, might have con-

firmed me his for ever. But I recollected my solemn promise to your Lordship, I remembered the claims of my unfortunate parents; I would not even for his own sake, give him in a wife a doubtful name, a dishonourable connection! Judge then, my Lord, having resisted this obvious and easy opportunity, whether or not I am now to be trusted!"

Lord Ennersdale turned aside; he seemed struggling with a new born feeling, which prompted him perhaps to yield to Magdalena's exalted mind the determination of her own fate; she marked the kindly drop which gathered in his eye; she rose, and would have thrown herself at his feet, in earnest supplication that he would yet retract his resolution; but at that moment the family from West-hay were announced, and the soft emotion vanished, never to be again renewed; for for vainly afterwards did Magdalena seek to introduce the subject; he stern-

ly interdicted its revival, and refused to hear one word that should attempt to shake his settled purpose.

The next day the travellers set out, and journeyed by easy stages to Clifton, where a ready furnished house had been prepared for Lady Piercefield and the young ladies, next to that where Henrietta and Victoria were fixed with the Honourable Mrs. Denbigh, sister to the late Lord Piercefield, Sir Eustace having separate apartments at a short distance. As they arrived late in the evening, they only saw Henrietta for a few minutes, who ran in as soon as they alighted; but as the evening was cold and damp, she said she would not permit Victoria to venture out, short as the distance was which separated them. Henrietta was in her usual lively spirits and good humour; she shook hands cordially with Magdalena, and expressed great pleasure in seeing her; but the expression was conveyed rather by

looks and manner than in words; for Henrietta might have said

"I ne'er was gude at speaking, aw my days."

After a late breakfast the next morning, they all went to Mrs. Denbigh's, whom they found alone. She was a very warm-hearted good-natured woman, of no particular elevation of mind, but leading an easy life on an income which enabled her to mix in the society she preferred, with great comfort, and to indulge herself in many kind actions to those who were less fortunate than herself. She generally had some young friends with her, for though no longer young herself, she made herself extremely pleasant to those who were so; the uniformity of her temper and the cheerfulness of her manners rendering her an universal favourite. If her juvenile friends were prevented by a narrow income from partaking any amusement particularly tempting, or wanted any article of dress which she happened to see them inspect, and replace with

a half sigh, saying, "It is very pretty, but I believe I must do without one this year," the ticket, hat, or spencer in question almost always found its way to their toilette table, and Mrs. Denbigh always "happened just then to have wanted to purchase something of that sort, in return for civility, or for having given trouble; and should really be obliged to her young friend to accept the purchase, as she did not require any thing for herself." No wonder then the kind Mrs. Denbigh was beloved, or that, when she was indisposed, she was surrounded by a grateful circle of assiduous young companions, who, according to their different dispositions, and her wishes, soothed her pain by soft attentions, or exhilarated her spirits by lively conversation.

Oh, how sweet, how refreshing is such an intercourse! how amiable the spirit, which thus conciliates by small kindnesses, and free from all querulous complainings, all sharp and austere re-

flections, wins even in old age the hearts of the young, and the affections of the gay! Why are there not more Mrs. Denbighs in a world of which they might so amply and so easily encrease the felicity?

Henrietta Arlington was the decided favourite of her aunt, who, indulgent to excess, had from infancy been the promoter of all her plans, and the liberal assistant of every expensive fancy; she had probably largely contributed to form the character of Henrietta into eccentricity and oddity, but she had also imparted to her young heart her own kind and charitable propensities.

On enquiry for the young ladies, Mrs. Denbigh said, that Victoria having rested ill, was not yet visible, but would, she believed, soon be down stairs. "As for Henrietta," she added, with a good natured smile, which spread a peculiar expression of sweetness on her tranquil countenance, "she is very busy, quite engaged with her experi-

ments; she is in her laboratory." "Her laboratory?" repeated Miss Arlington, "dear aunt, what new whim has she taken now?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Mrs. Denbigh; "you know I don't understand such things; but we have had a great philosopher lecturing here; so Henrietta and a whole troop of girls got me to go with them; and to be sure I was quite pleased! The experiments were very pretty and amusing." "But were you not tired, sister?" said Lady Piercefield; "for I know you never made such things your study." "Why, sometimes, to be sure, I was a little tired, but then the young people were so delighted! And if I happened to be looking round the room, I had so many nice girls nodding and smiling at me, that it quite revived my spirits, and I would rather have staid all night than have hurried my young people away. So Henrietta took a vast liking to this lecturing, and especially the

chemistry; and after the lecture was over, the young party used to get round the table, and ask the Professor questions, and he always seemed glad to answer them, though I thought the poor man must be tired to death, talking of such difficult things so long together. At last, Henrietta engaged the Professor to come home to her, and he told her all about gasses, and acids, and alkalies, and a thousand hard names that I never could remember one of, and he admired her memory, and was pleased to see how aptly she learned; so between them, they persuaded me to let her have this laboratory fitted up."

"And is not she tired of it, yet, Ma'am?"

"No, my dear; there she is almost always employed; I know however, she will want a new wardrobe; for she has by some means or other burned all her dresses, and petticoats, and stockings, so that when they come out of

the wash, they are a perfect sight! But never mind, sister; as I was the cause of the mischief by indulging her, I will replenish her wardrobe; we have lived so quietly of late, that I have spent nothing." Victoria now made her appearance; she was still somewhat thin and pale, but her fine eyes had resumed their brilliancy, and the elasticity of health seemed to be again restored to her figure; she was grown somewhat taller, and looked interesting and beautiful.

On her entrance, she cast a timid glance around, and a transient blush lighted up her face; then advancing, she embraced Lady Piercefield with great tenderness, civilly saluted Miss Arlington, and clasped Magdalena in her arms with a warmth which enchanted her. How sweet was that disposition, which jealousy could not alter, nor envy of what she imagined to be perfect happiness, in the least disturb! Magdalena delighted to see her so

much like the sweet Victoria she had first known, returned her soft caresses with tender affection. Victoria introduced her to Mrs. Denbigh's particular notice, as her dear Miss Melrose, the Magdalena she had so often heard her mention. They now sat down together, somewhat distant from the rest of the party; and while Lady Piercefield and Miss Arlington were enquiring for some acquaintances they had at Clifton, Victoria and Magdalena enjoyeda few minutes of unrestrained conversation; their chief topic was the late tour in which Miss Melrose had been engaged. Neither mentioned the name of Eustace; Magdalena avoided it out of delicacy, and Victoria seemed unwilling to trust herself on the subject. Suddenly, while they were yet speaking, a most violent report was heard like the bursting of a gun, accompanied by a loud rattling, and a concussion that shook every window. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Lady Piercefield,

"what is that? Surely, some powder magazine has blown up, or is it the shock of an earthquake?" While they all gazed upon each other in silent terror, the door of the room flew open, and Henrietta, pale, terrified, and covered with a sort of smoke-like appearance rushed in. She had no covering on her head, and the hair on her fore head, her eye-brows, and even the skin of her face seemed scorched. "Good gracious, Henrietta!" said Lady Piercefield, "what on earth is the matter? what have you been about?" "Oh, pray fetch me some water," she replied; "I have burnt my hands terribly, and frightened myself more than ever I was frightened in my life." Victoria ran for a bason of water, and the rest surrounding Henrietta, pressed her with questions, to know what was the cause of all this confusion. "There, there, good people," said she, a little recovering her usual manner, "give me a moment's breath, and I will tell you the

whole story. I suppose my good aunt here has told you my last new fancy; I have been trying to compose a particular kind of detonating powder; I made some mistake or other, or something happened that should not, and it all flew off, filled the room with smoke, burned my hands, and ornamented my face in this attractive manner. Oh, my dear, I am glad you are come with the water, for I am in a great deal of pain." She then bathed her face and hands, laughed at the absurdity of her appearance, and coolly said, "Send for the carpenter, my dear aunt, and let him take down all the shelves in my poor laboratory; as to the glass retorts, phials, and other brittle articles, I believe there are not many left. Luckily the window was open, or my brains might possibly have been still more scattered than they are at present." Seeing Lady Piercefield shudder, she added, "Never mind, Mamma, I have had a narrow escape, and there is an end of

chemistry; I was almost tired of it before." "Oh, Henrietta!" said Lady Piercefield, "when will you have done with such whims? When will you learn to be a little steady, and like other people?"

"As to being like other people, Ma'am, it's a thing I have an aversion to; but I believe I shall try to be steady, for I really begin to think it is worse than foolish to waete time and money on such useless fancies." "Henrietta moralizing! Henrietta talking of being steady!" said Miss Arlington, with affected surprize; "nay, then, indeed, wonders will never cease." "Indeed, niece," said Mrs. Denbigh, with something approaching to anger in her countenance, "you need not speak of your sister in that manner, for in all good things, and in all kind heartedness, she is as steady as you or any other person, let them be ever so grave and particular; and I don't doubt, when she is married, she will make as good a wife,

and as affectionate a mother, as any of you mighty grave young ladies."

"When she *is* married!" said Miss Arlington, with a sneer.

"And let me tell, you, Miss Arlington,——" rejoined Mrs. Denbigh, with encreased warmth.

"Oh, no, my dear Ma'am," interrupted Miss Arlington, with one of her cold repulsive looks, "I beseech you to tell me nothing! I am quite willing to take all Henrietta's conquests and probabilities of marrying for granted, and am wholly indifferent on the matter."

"More shame for you, Matilda," said Mrs. Denbigh; "Henrietta would never be indifferent to any thing that promised good to you."

"That is true, indeed," exclaimed Victoria; "Henrietta has never joined in Mrs. Greville's beautiful Ode to Indifference; Matilda has had the very letter of the petition fulfilled in her favour:"

"And what of life remains for me,
"I'll pass in sober ease;
"Half pleas'd, contented will I be,
"Contented, half to please."

"I am glad to see Miss Devereux so well recovered," said the mortified Matilda, "and that her wit has lost none of its——" She hesitated, as if inclined to add impertinence, but said—"politeness of allusion!" "Sparring already, young ladies?" said Lady Piercefield; "do you think this kind of conversation elegant or agreeable?" But sister, have you any particular meaning in what you said of Henrietta's marrying? We are all friends, and you may speak without reserve. "Oh, not before *me*, I entreat you," said Henrietta, laughing; "a pretty figure I am to sit here, and even *hear* of making conquests! Magdalena, will you come with me to my dressing room? I want to talk to you. Matilda, will you spare yourself the fatigue of listening to my renown? As to Victoria, the subject is

threadbare for her; so, my dear, you may come with us, or take a nap where you are." Matilda returned no answer, but Magdalena readily accompanied her, Victoria declining to go with them, as she did not wish to interrupt their tete-a-tete. Henrietta's dressing-room was half filled with glass retorts, crucibles, and other chemical apparatus. "Take all these things away at your first leisure, Nelson," she said, "I have done with chemistry! See what a pretty figure I have made of myself!" "Dear Madam," replied Nelson, "what has happened? I heard a terrible noise just now, but thought it was something in the street!"

"Never mind, ask no questions, but see if you can make me a little less hideous before my uncle comes! I shall not be presentable without a veil this age. By the by, Magdalena, that's a very pretty one of yours; where did you get it?" It was the veil Montaubrey had restored to her at Berwick, and

which she had since worn very frequently; she blushed,

"What, I see," said Henrietta, "you have not left off that silly trick of blushing yet! Is there some tender story, attached to that veil, my dear? I know you sentimental young ladies have a history or a mystery for every article of dress you wear."

"At any rate," said Magdalena, "if I have not left off blushing, Henrietta, I see you have not left off teazing!"

"That's a proof that I approach the truth! Nothing teazes so much as a jest that refers to reality!"

She then asked some questions in French, respecting the late tour, and on what terms she was with Sir Eustace, rallying Magdalena at intervals, on the gravity of her countenance, and the shortness of her replies. She soon dismissed her maid, and then told Magdalena, that Victoria, under her instructions, had acquired some controul over her feelings, and some command of her

countenance. "I wish, however," she added, "that she were not to be again exposed to situations so painful, as too probably await her; I believe I shall be tempted to marry sooner than I intended, and take her with me into Kent, out of the way of you all!"

"To marry! are you then really going to be married?" "Oh dear, yes! I forgot you did not know it, but if Mamma does not object, I have made a kind of an engagement, with a certain Sir Arthur Maitland. A good kind of young man enough, I assure you! Sensible too! Not very handsome; the fitter for me you will say, especially with these eye-brows! I don't know how he came to take a fancy to me; I believe it was one day when I was particularly good and agreeable, and talked pretty rationally; but he has seen me since in all my *Zimri* moods, and even the chemistry only caused a smile, and a sort of pleasure, that I could amuse myself so easily; he is certainly

very good-tempered! I do not know what he will say to the chemistry now though, for it certainly has not improved my beauty! By the way, I should add, he is immensely rich, and is contented to take me, with only the few odd thousands Mamma and my good aunt Denbigh can muster for me; nay, I am vain enough to believe, he would even take me without them; we talk sometimes of building churches, and endowing hospitals, but I am now actually determined to be *steady*, as Matilda says, and not talk any more nonsense, or do any more foolish things; don't you think it will improve me greatly?"

"I really do not know," said Magdalena; "I like you so well as you are, that I am not quite sure I wish you altered." "Oh, don't be afraid; I shall still retain enough of my agreeable versatility, to prevent my stiffening into stone, as I sometimes think will be the case with Matilda."

She had by this time completed her toilette, and they found with pleasure, that her face was less injured than they at first expected; her hands were however still painful, and she listened very patiently to the kind lecture which Sir Eustace, whom they found below, gave her on the absurdity of running such risks. Lady Piercefield was in high spirits, delighted with the prospect of Henrietta's being settled so much to her advantage. Matilda was grave, silent, and even unusually petulant. Victoria, tolerably composed, but marking with an eye of half-concealed anguish, Sir Eustace's attentions to Magdalena, who had of late received them with less constraint than she used to do.

Two or three days were spent in seeing the beautiful environs of Clifton: St. Vincent's rocks, Lord Clifford's park, &c., are all too well known to need description. Sir Arthur Maitland was a constant attendant on Hen-

rietta, and speedily became a decided favourite with them all. At Mrs. Denbigh's they were sure of meeting with a number of pleasant young people, who were always ready to join their little parties, and the week passed at Clifton they all thought particularly agreeable. At the end of it however, they were obliged to quit the sweet-tempered Mrs. Denbigh, and to begin their journey to the metropolis, where they were to meet Lord Piercefield, whom his mother secretly destined for Victoria, but was too wise to express her wishes on that subject; and of him or any man, save one whom she believed to be entirely out of the question, Victoria never entertained a thought; her sole endeavour was to maintain the composure she had so hardly attained, and to see as much of Magdalena, and as little of Sir Eustace as possible.

CHAP. V.

THE most fashionable newspapers announced the arrival of "Sir Eustace Willoughby, at his house in Portman Square; and of Lady Piercefield, accompanied by her two elegant daughters, the honourable Miss Arlingtons, the beautiful Miss Devereux, the great East India fortune, her ladyship's ward, and Miss Melrose, the youthful and lovely ward, and relation of the Earl of Ennersdale, in Burlington Street."

We do not mean to follow them through the routine of a London winter; it will naturally be supposed, that Lady Piercefield's numerous connections paid her and her young friends every proper attention, and that she and her daughters entered into the mode of life to which they were accus-

tomed. Victoria and Magdalena, not having been yet presented, moved in a sphere somewhat more circumscribed; as it was not considered consistent with etiquette, that they should join in large parties. The opera, and play, and a few private balls, and concerts, were thought sufficient for them, and they most gladly acquiesced in an arrangement, which left them at leisure to enjoy the society of each other, and their own favourite pursuits without interruption. Henrietta often joined them in their comparative retirement, but when Sir Arthur Maitland followed her to town, she was of course more engaged, and less with them. Both these amiable girls, conducted themselves with good sense and propriety. No indiscreet confidences, no sympathetic condolements, broke in upon their resolutions, or induced the indulgence of improper sensibility; each considered her fate as fixed, and to strengthen, not weaken their minds, was their constant

endeavour. If ever the conversation was taking a turn, inconsistent with the tacit agreement they appeared to have made with each other, Victoria would place herself at the piano-forte, and request Magdalena to join her in a duet; or Magdalena would take up an Italian author, in which language Victoria was more deeply grounded than herself, and beg her assistance, to explain some doubtful or difficult passage. Thus calmly passed the first fortnight of their being in London, varied two or three times by the play, the opera, or a small select party, when Lord Piercefield arrived. He was a fine, animated, handsome young man, a favourable likeness of Henrietta, and like her, possessing a large share of vivacity and good sense, disguised however in some degree, by an assumed frivolity of manner, and a great wish to be extremely the *ton*. It was obvious, that he was amazingly struck at first sight with both his mother's lovely

young friends; and for the first evening he seemed to be vaccilating between them. After dinner music was proposed, and the rich voice, and sweet expression of Magdalena, seemed wholly to enchant him; he hung entranced over her chair, as she exhibited her graceful figure, and beautiful arms upon the harp, till Sir Eustace grew uneasy, and began to fear a fortunate rival in his young and elegant kinsman.

Victoria, struggling with her vexation, to see the anxiety with which Sir Eustace watched every look and smile of Magdalena, rallied, to disguise it, all her natural spirits, and gave loose to the sportive gaiety of her wit; till gradually Lord Piercefield drew off from Magdalena, and with admiring looks, fixed on Victoria's ever changing countenance and brilliant eyes, entreated she would also indulge them with a song. Henrietta diverted herself and Sir Arthur, by commenting on this scene, and compared her brother to

Millamour, in the witty comedy of "Know your own Mind."

Victoria at length consented to sing, and chose the pleasing little song of "Dear Edgar should I ne'er again,"* which seemed to those who best knew her, particularly suited to her disposition and sentiments. As she repeated the last two lines,

> "But laughing spirits, laughing eyes,
> Can love, and love you most sincerely,"

Her eyes fell involuntarily upon Sir Eustace, and meeting, her countenance was instantly suffused with a vivid blush, which added so much animation

* The following are the words of this song:

SONG.

Dear Edgar, should I ne'er again,
Behold that form, I vow sincerely,
My heart the image shall retain,
And ever, ever love you dearly.

I cannot weep, I heave no sighs,
This heart was ever blithe and cheerly,
But laughing spirits, laughing eyes,
Can love, and love you most sincerely.

to her features, that Lord Piercefield, entirely drawn away from Magdalena, became rivetted by the side of Victoria. Matilda, out of humour to find herself and her accomplishments so little admired, now affecting a tone of raillery, said, "A very pretty expressive song that, Miss Devereux; pray, for which of the gentlemen present was that kind declaration intended?" "What declaration, Matilda?" said Sir Eustace; "I do not understand your allusion." "Why, Sir, that laughing spirits, laughing eyes, such as we all know Miss Devereux possesses, *can* love, and love *you* most sincerely!" "Good heavens! Miss Arlington!" exclaimed Victoria, almost sinking with confusion.

"Oh, it is like Matilda!" said Henrietta, glowing with indignation, "to interrupt the most innocent amusements, with some ill-natured remark! Pray, gentlemen, all rise, and bow to Victoria; for the *kind declaration* was, I dare say, meant as much for one as

the other! Sir Arthur, I hope you feel properly grateful for the honour; brother, I am afraid such a compliment would be quite disagreeable to you! Uncle, your claims on Victoria's gratitude and affection are too well known to be disputed!" "They are indeed," said Victoria, in a low voice, but with energy, "I hope I never shall refuse publicly to acknowledge them! But indeed, I could not have supposed my poor little song liable to any mis-interpretation."

"There's a dear good girl!" whispered Henrietta to her; "I love you for being present to yourself, and disappointing Matilda's intended malice." "And, oh," whispered Victoria, "dear kind Henrietta, how I love you for your ready assistance!" Magdalena, who was seated between them, heard this little dialogue, as they leant across her to speak to each other, and pressed a hand of each with a look so affectionate and animated, as again drew to-

wards her the attention of Lord Piercefield.

"Mon Frere," said Henrietta, laughing, "il me semble que vous avez *bu du Flacon couleur de Rose!** Mais prenez garde!" Lord Piercefield coloured, made some rallying reply, and the conversation took a more general turn.

From this time it was obvious that Victoria had determined the heart of Lord Piercefield in her favour; his attention to her was unremitting, and he very shortly after, with the full consent of his mother and Sir Eustace, offered himself to her acceptance; he was politely, but firmly rejected. Lady Piercefield talked to her seriously, Henrietta rallied and reasoned by turns, in vain; she was determined, and endured what almost amounted to a persecution, with resolute inflexibility. Sir Eustace looked grave; he interrogated his sister, Henrietta, and finally Magdalena, whe-

* Marmontel's Quatre Flacons.

ther Victoria had confided to them, any reason for refusing a proposal apparently so unexceptionable? With truth they could declare she had not. Did they suspect her of having formed any prior attachment? This question they were obliged to evade, for how could they tell him what they really believed, that he was himself the object of her exclusive and decided preference! At length he demanded an audience of Victoria alone.

"Oh, I cannot, cannot go to him!" she said, turning alternately red and pale, and trembling in every joint, "he will ask me what are my objections to Lord Piercefield! Whether . . . Oh, I know what he will ask me! And I cannot tell him! Yet how shall I ever dissemble with him, who has been so kind a friend, who has so much right to expect my entire confidence! Dearest Henrietta, go to him, pray entreat him to excuse me! You know but too

well how unfit I am for such a conference!"

Henrietta unwillingly consented, but returned shortly afterwards, and said, that Sir Eustace was not pleased at Victoria's objecting to come to him. "Afraid!" said he, "of what? Have I been so harsh, so tyrannical, that she fears I shall wish to force her inclinations?" "Oh, no! oh, no!" said Victoria, weeping while her emotion dyed her cheeks with scarlet. "I will go to him this moment; I would rather die than offend him." "I hope," said Henrietta, when she was gone, "the little simpleton will not betray herself! She says sometimes she envies your composure of mind, Magdalena, for that you receive the greatest happiness the world can offer, with tranquillity approaching to indifference; I told her that possibly you might not think your lot so superlatively happy, as she supposed it, and then she was quite angry with me, for thinking you could see

with any eyes but hers. I congratulate you however, my dear, I see you are inclined to act rationally." "I hope I am so," replied Magdalena; "you have kindly said you would ask me no questions; I believe it is wise not to be too confiding; but assure yourself, Henrietta, it is my full purpose, to do every thing that can ensure the happiness of the best man in the world, for such I think Sir Eustace Willoughby, and I trust by the same means I shall confirm my own." "You are a good and sensible girl," said Henrietta, "and I love you very much; but I love also this little silly Victoria, who does not think or act half so well or so wisely, as you do; but that sort of romantic folly, sits so becomingly, and seems so natural to her, I believe we love her the better for indulging it." "She is in my eyes," said Magdalena, "the loveliest creature I ever saw, and the total want of disguise in her character, the entire forgetfulness of rule which she

sometimes evinces, are, I think, captivating to excess." Victoria soon returned to them; she was pale, and the lustre of her eyes was quenched in tears. "Well, my dear," said Henrietta, "am I to congratulate my brother?" "Oh, no," replied Victoria, "my guardian has said a great deal in his favour, and I am sure he deserves a much better creature than I am! Sir Eustace asked me too; he asked me it I prefered any other person! Oh, what could I say to him! Forgive me, Magdalena, how strange I am to let you thus read my heart! But you need not be jealous; I would not, if I could draw away his affections from you; I know how much more worthy of him you are, than I shall ever be; but when you are actually his wife, I know I shall tell you all my feelings, so perhaps you had better send me away." "Yes, yes," said Henrietta, while Magdalena was tenderly caressing the sweet girl, "I shall take you with me into Kent; but tell

me, I hope you were not quite so . . . so unreserved with Sir Eustace."

"No!" said Victoria, colouring, "I am not quite so lost to the dictates of propriety. I merely said, I could not like Lord Piercefield, as I ought to do the man I was to marry; and indeed, I was so young, I had rather not marry at all at present. He reasoned with me a great deal, and said every thing that was just and kind; and at last, I am afraid he thought me rather perverse and obstinate, in declining, as I positively did, even to consider farther on the subject."

"Well, you have behaved very well," said Henrietta, "never mind; my brother has too much of *me* in him, to break his heart; he will soon find out some fair damsel, to console him for your cruelty; we will go into Kent together early in the spring, and there we will find somebody you can like better. Plenty of time, child!"

Hitherto Magdalena had seen no-

thing of Montaubrey; at the public places, she had involuntarily looked for him, and every one she saw nearly of his height and figure, caused a palpitation of her heart, which too well convinced her, that though she was at present tolerably tranquil, the slightest renewal of their intercourse, would overset all her composure. Sometimes with a natural inconsistency, she felt half angry with Reginald, for obeying her so implicitly, and withdrawing so entirely from her sight, when to meet was so easy. At other times more reasonable, she felt grateful to him, for sparing her any farther trial, and permitting her, since her destiny seemed absolutely determined, to fulfil it with propriety.

Several young men of fashion were much struck by Magdalena's beauty, and the graceful elegance of her deportment; perhaps she was the more admired, for a certain artlessness of manner, which contrasted well with the air

of high fashion, of most of the young ladies with whom she was surrounded; that retiring modesty, which proved her so new to the world, was probably an additional attraction for young men, satiated with the highly polished, or affected manners, of fashionable girls. Sir William Colville, a handsome young baronet, unexceptionable in character and fortune, proposed to Lady Piercefield, for her fair ward Miss Melrose; to this proposal, her ladyship, by Magdalena's desire, replied, that as Miss Melrose was absolutely engaged, she must, with thanks for the honour of his good opinion, decline the proposal altogether. Sir Eustace however, entreated Magdalena, before the answer was sent, to consider whether, from the suitability of the age, and the goodness of his character, Sir William Colville, was not more worthy of her acceptance than himself; but, on this point she had no hesitation, and with the most entire determination, persisted in reject-

ing the address of Sir William. Report now began to whisper, from seeing Sir Eustace perpetually at her side, that he was the successful candidate for Miss Melrose's favour, and with some wonder at the singularity of her taste, in preferring a man so much older than herself, the host of admirers, who had on her first appearance, hung about her, withdrew whenever he came near, and Sir Eustace at length began to believe his happiness secure.

About six weeks after their arrival in London, the whole party went to the Opera, where Lady Piercefield had a box. Here in a box near them, Magdalena soon discovered Lady Isabella Aubrey with a large party, one of whom was a lady not young, but still handsome, and whose fine commanding figure and expressive eyes gave her a striking resemblance to Lord Montaubrey; she was magnificently dressed, with a profusion of jewels, and Magdalena immediately concluded it was the Dowa-

ger Countess, for the glimpse she once had of her at Delamere was too slight to admit of her knowing her again. Isabella was elegantly dressed; her person, Magdalena thought, greatly improved, and with her air of high fashion, made her a very attractive object in the eyes of most of the gentlemen present. Lord Piercefield, who now began to resent Victoria's determined rejection of his attentions, and to be somewhat tired of attending what to him had very much the air of a dull family party, was standing in a sort of lounging attitude at the back of the box, when seeing his mother and sisters bow to Lady Isabella, who was chatting and laughing with three or four young men of the first fashion, he bent eagerly forward, and asked who that very fine girl was. "Which very fine girl?" said Henrietta; "there are so many visible, I don't know which you mean." "Pshaw! nonsense, you know well enough; the young lady in white, with emeralds, that you bowed to just

now?" "Oh, Lady Isabella Aubrey." "Lady Isabella Aubrey! What, sister to the Earl of Montaubrey?" "Yes, the same." "I wish somebody would introduce me to her; she's a lovely creature. I knew a little of Montaubrey abroad; he's a fine fellow, only a little too sober and sentimental. Faith, there he is, just come into the pit; how well he dresses! I will go and speak to him, and get him to take me to his sister; of course, he will go to her box presently."

"Pray do," said Matilda; we shall all be glad to get rid of you; for you are never still a minute, and really quite annoy one." "Don't you think he'll go to his sister presently, Henrietta?" asked Lord Piercefield, without paying the least attention to Matilda's remark. "Indeed, I don't know," answered she laughing; "if he is as much tired of her, as you appear to be of your sisters, I should rather think not." "I'll go and try, however," replied Lord Pierce-

field, and in a few minutes Magdalena saw him join Montaubrey, with whom he shook hands, and entered into conversation, the eyes of both glancing at intervals to the box where she sat, or to Lady Montaubrey's. Unable to endure this long, Magdalena turned to Victoria, who sat a little behind her, and made some remarks on a new and beautiful scene which the drawing up of the curtain for the ballet displayed, and affected to be deeply engaged with the objects on the stage. Sir Eustace leaning towards her, said in a low voice, but with a glance half arch, half serious, "Voila Monsieur Vallancey!"

"Vallancey! where?—Oh, where? Which? Do shew me," said Matilda, with unusual eagerness; "I have been dying to see him ever since the day when he came to Berwick to see Miss Melrose."

"Vallancey!" said Henrietta, "I never heard of the name? Who is he, Magdalena?"

"Nobody, nothing;" answered Magdalena vexed almost to death by these insupportable enquiries."

"Oh, a sort of dream of my uncles, I suppose," replied Henrietta dryly; "a kind of visionary being!—An entire non-entity!"

"Ah, Magdalena!" whispered Sir Eustace, "would I could think him such!" She made no answer, but blushing, confused, and distressed, again pretended to be deeply engaged in attending to the business of the stage, of which, from the first dancer to the lowest figurante, not one object was really visible to her eyes. Matilda continued to teaze Sir Eustace to tell her which was Mr. Vallancey, but he dismissed the subject by some evasive answers, and her curiosity remained unsatisfied.

Magdalena unable to withdraw her attention from those so deeply interesting to her feelings, soon saw Montaubrey and Lord Piercefield leave the pit,

and she trembled lest they should come to Lady Piercefield's box; that trial, however, she was spared; but she saw them enter Lady Montaubrey's to whom and to his sister, Montaubrey introduced his companion, who, finding a chair by Lady Isabella, entered into conversation with her, which seemed pleasing to both; for turning their backs to the stage, they never ceased talking, and Lord Piercefield continued stationary till the end of the opera.

In the waiting room, Lady Piercefield and her party were detained till their carriages could draw up. Sir Arthur Maitland went to see for them, and Sir Eustace was the only gentleman left with them. Lady Piercefield held one of his arms, and Magdalena the other. As they stood chatting to some ladies of their acquaintance, Magdalena suddenly felt some one softly take her hand; she started, and looking round, saw Lady Isabella Aubrey. "Dearest Magdalena," she said in a

low voice, "can you forgive me? Can you ever pardon the cruelty of my behaviour at West-hay?" "Most gladly, most delightedly," said Magdalena, her face glowing with joy, and her eyes expressing the tenderest affection. "How good you are!" replied Isabella, tenderly pressing her hand; "Reginald has convinced me how unjust I was; my admirable friend, why dare I not cultivate a more intimate intercourse with you? Ah, Magdalena, have you seen Montaubrey, who has been watching you all the evening?" "Yes," replied Magdalena. "Good heavens!" returned Isabella, "what cruel trials are you both for ever exposed to! For I am sure, Magdalena, you have not forgotten him." Magdalena sighed, and turned from the eager glance of Isabella, which seemed designed to read her heart in her countenance. Sir Eustace, whose attention seldom deviated long together from Magdalena, now turned towards them, and Isabella

addressing him and Lady Piercefield, they all stood talking some minutes. Lady Montaubrey's carriage was now announced; she had been chatting with some of her acquaintance, and turning round, said, "Come Isabella, or the carriage will be obliged to draw off." At that moment Lord Piercefield and Montaubrey came up; the latter catching the eyes of Sir Eustace, coloured excessively high; he bowed with deep but apparently distant respect to Magdalena, but as their eyes met, the glance of each was but too well understood by the other.

"Do you come with us, Frederic?" said Lady Piercefield to her son. "No, Ma'am," he answered carelessly; and while Montaubrey drew his mother's arm through his own, Lord Piercefield offered his to Isabella, who accepted it with a gracious smile, and saying good night in a general way to Lady Piercefield's party, though her eyes distinguished Magdalena, she departed.

Sir Arthur now returned, the carriages were announced, and most glad was Magdalena to find herself in Lady Piercefield's coach, and to hide from observation the trembling agitation of her frame, and the tears which she could no longer restrain.

CHAP. V.

MAGDALENA thought the next day that there was an unusual seriousness in the manners of Sir Eustace; she saw that he had imbibed some suspicions respecting Montaubrey, and she almost wished, at whatever risk, that he would insist on an explanation of her real sentiments. This transient view of Reginald, and the renewal of her intercourse with Isabella, had destroyed the tranquillity she had so painfully acquired, and augmented her un-

happiness to a degree almost insupportable. All the conflicts of her mind were renewed, and there were moments in which her existence was a burthen to her. With all the exertion in her power, she combatted these cruel sensations; but her mind was too strong for her body, and a low fever confined her almost entirely to her room for two or three days: She was hardly sorry for an indisposition which accounted for her dejection, and superseded the necessity for her conversing with any body. By degrees she became more calm, and the kind attentions of Victoria and Henrietta succeeded in restoring her to health. From them she learned that Lord Piercefield was continually at Lady Montaubrey's, and was earnestly endeavouring to promote an intimacy between the two families; but that the dowager Countess, though receiving him very graciously, yet hung back from an introduction to Lady Piercefield, at which her ladyship was

considerably piqued. Magdalena however learned, from some words which passed between Victoria aud Henrietta, when they supposed her sleeping, that they all concluded Lady Montaubrey's objection to the intimacy was caused by Miss Melrose's residence with Lady Piercefield, and she became every day more painfully sensible of the various ways in which her situation was unpleasant. In the course of the week, however, Lord Piercefield contrived to carry his point, and the two families were introduced to each other; a ceremony which was followed by an invitation from Lady Montaubrey to Lady Piercefield and *family*, without specifying either Miss Devereux or Miss Melrose, both of whom, without the least appearance of singularity, declined it, not having been in the habit of joining large parties.

In a few days, Magdalena was well enough to go out again, and a party was formed for Drury Lane Theatre,

to see Tancred and Sigismunda; Mrs. Siddons in the heroine. Magdalena had never seen that most admirable actress, who at this period performed very seldom; and she was quite anxious to have an opportunity of witnessing an excellence of which she had heard so much; to the play itself, she was totally a stranger, and Henrietta begged her not to read it, that she should not destroy the interest of the catastrophe. On the evening fixed, places were taken for Lady Piercefield and her party; Sir Eustace was under a necessity of attending a great public dinner, but promised, if possible, to get away time enough to join them at the end of the play. Henrietta had a cold, and declined going; so that the party consisted of Lady Piercefield, Miss Arlington, Victoria, Magdalena, and a Sir James and Lady Wilson, with whom Lady Piercefield's family were intimate. Lord Piercefield said perhaps he might see them in the course of the evening,

but he was, they understood, as usual, going to some party where Lady Isabella was to be present.

Lady Piercefield's party arrived so unfashionably early, to please the young ladies, as to witness the drawing up of the curtain; their places were in a very conspicuous part of the side boxes, and the beauty and elegance of the young ladies attracted many eyes towards them; the succeeding business of the stage, however, so completely rivetted the attention of Magdalena, that the whole world might have gazed on her without her perceiving a single being it contained. The character of Sigismunda, at once so tender and so dignified, charmed her; and the animated and interesting Tancred, his noble and disinterested sentiments, and the affecting tenderness of his expressions, immediately and powerfully reminded her of those of Montaubrey. At the end of the first act, Magdalena was at leisure to look round, and started at meeting

the eyes of the very being whose likeness she had traced with so much delight in the hero of the piece. Montaubrey was standing in a box near them, and close by him was a gentleman of a striking and dignified appearance, his air was noble and military, and a very brilliant star of a foreign order glittered on his side; he was tall, well-formed, and though no longer young, his countenance was remarkably handsome and full of expression; he appeared to be slightly acquainted with Lord Montaubrey, and from time to time they conversed together, though not with an air of intimacy. Montaubrey's manner in speaking to the stranger was marked with respect, which was returned by an appearance of courtesy and urbanity, as if the stranger knew his own consequence, without being proud of it. The appearance of the stranger was so striking, that Lady Piercefield asked Sir James Wilson if he could tell who it was. He replied

that it was the Marquis of Glenalbin, that he was lately returned from a long residence at the court of ******, where be had commenced his military career at an early age, and had obtained very high honours, of which his star was one distinction; that he had there borne the title of Count Lichtenstein, but that he was collaterally related to the late Marquis of Glenalbin, to whose title he had succeeded by the death of the Marquis and his two sons, and was now come to England to take possession of the title and estates. "Is he married?" asked Lady Piercefield. "No, I believe not," answered Sir James, "but in all probability he will not long remain single, for his estates here or rather in Scotland, are very large; and his acquirements under the illustrious sovereign he has so long served, are understood to be immense, which, with his fine person and manners, which are quite fascinating, will doubtless render him a great object in the eyes of the

ladies. What say you, Miss Arlington? Will you try for the noble stranger?" The eyes of Montaubrey, frequently turned towards Magdalena, attracted those of the Marquis to follow their directions; he took out his opera glass, and seemed to be attentively gazing at her for some minutes; he then turned to Montaubrey, and she fancied asked who she was; shortly afterwards he quitted the box, and Montaubrey threw himself into a seat, where, without being observed, he could gaze on that face, which to him was a never failing object of attraction and delight. The second act now commenced, and during the first speech Magdalena heard the door of their box open, and involuntarily looked round, rather supposing it might be Sir Eustace; it was however the Marquis of Glenalbin. Lady Piercefield's party occupied the two front rows, as they reserved places for Lord Piercefield, Sir Eustace, and Lady Wilson's

two brothers, who had promised to join them; and the stranger sat down behind Sir James Wilson, to whom he spoke, and hoped he was not intruding by entering that box. Sir James assured them to the contrary, adding, "I wonder that the whole of the box is not filled, as the house is so crowded; but I suppose the party who had taken those seats, is composed of persons too fashionable to come early; we have some young ladies with us, whose taste is sufficiently natural to wish to see the whole play. The Marquis now requested Sir James to present him to Lady Piercefield and the ladies of her party; his manners had something foreign in them, but were noble and graceful; and they were all delighted with him. On Magdalena, however, his eyes were fixed, with an expression of such delighted admiration, that Victoria whispered to her, she had certainly made a conquest of the illustrious stranger. For some

time, this little incident, and the certainty that Montaubrey, though less conspicuous, was still observing her, diverted Magdalena's attention from the stage; and just as it became again fixed, the party who had engaged the places behind Lady Piercefield's, arrived, and the Marquis thinking himself an intruder, would have retired; Sir James Wilson, however, assuring him they had abundance of room, and pressed him, if he had no other party at the Theatre, to remain with them; to which, he with apparent pleasure assented, and seated himself exactly behind Magdalena, to whom and to Victoria he occasionally addressed a few words, till the encreasing interest of the play engaged the attention of them all. As it proceeded, Magdalena's whole soul became absorbed in the action; the story, the sufferings of Sigismunda were in some respects so like her own, that with difficulty she concealed in any degree the sympathetic anguish

which shook her frame. In weeping she was not singular, but she dreaded, lest the excessive agitation she felt, should be remarked, and demand an explanation beyond her power to give.

The stranger behind her, seemed also to feel with unusual acuteness, the deep distress of the separated lovers; she heard him sigh, she heard him exclaim in broken sentences, in a language she did not understand, but which she conjectured to be Russian, and in tones, which unquestionably expressed the tenderest emotions. With difficulty, Magdalena supported herself through the four first acts; she dreaded too, lest Sir Eustace should arrive, and trace in her too evident anguish, a source of feeling unguessed by others. At length, when the melancholy catastrophe of the piece drew near, and the vengeance of Osmond fell on his innocent, but unfortunate wife, the stranger suddenly exclaimed, in a low and stifled tone; "Ah! it is too much! I cannot endure

it!" and rising hastily, was quitting the box, when Magdalena, equally overpowered, and no longer able to support her feelings, rose also, stretched out both her hands, without knowing what she did, towards the Marquis, exclaiming, "Oh, heavens! oh, dreadful fate! save me, save me!" and would have fallen to the ground, had not he caught her, and trembling with complicated emotions, supported her in his arms. All was instantly confusion. The marquis and Sir James, bore the still insensible girl into the lobby, followed by Lady Piercefield and Miss Arlington, Lady Wilson remaining with Victoria, at Lady Piercefield's request, who was anxious to create as little bustle as possible. Montaubrey, who had but too well foreseen, that Magdalena would not be able to bear this affecting tragedy, met them in the lobby, and assisted in conveying Magdalena to one of the waiting-rooms; where water being procured, she revived, and found

herself, when sense in some degree returned, supported between the Marquis and Montaubrey. At first her senses wandered, and she exclaimed, "Oh, my Lord, do not, do not force me to marry him! My heart is not his, and you know Tancred will die with grief, when he knows I am married." Thus mingling wild recollections of the play, with her own real sorrows; Lady Piercefield soothed her, and soon more perfectly restored, she raised her head from the shoulder of the Marquis, and would have apologized for the trouble she had given him, but her eyes caught the countenance of Reginald; pale and full of anguish, he knelt before her, holding in one hand a glass of water, and with the other, unseen as he believed by all, pressing her cold and trembling hand to his heart. Lady Piercefield now consulted aside, with her daughter and Sir James, what was next to be done, as their carriages, in all probability, would not arrive for some time, their inten-

tion having been to remain during the performance of a grand melo-drama after the tragedy; it was however possible, that Sir Eustace Willoughby's might be arrived, and Sir James went to enquire.

In the mean time, Montaubrey, not imagining the Marquis would attend to him, or not caring if he did, in a low voice, as he knelt before Magdalena, lamented their miserable destiny. "Ah, Magdalena," whispered he, "if thus an imaginary tale of woe affects you, how through life will you endure the cruel separation to which our hard fate condemns us! It is not yet too late, to save yourself and me, from years of horrible despair, of consuming anguish! Yet oh, yet relent; yet you may be mine." "Oh never, never," she replied, still extremely agitated; "my word is pledged; my solemn promises are sealed in heaven! How often, oh, Montaubrey! How often must I conjure you not to tempt me! I am miserable,

but I will not be guilty; my mother from her silent tomb, my father from his blood-stained grave, oh, horrible! would rise to condemn me, should I waver now!"

"Softly! speak low," whispered Montaubrey. She started, coloured, and met the eyes of the Marquis, from which the tears were falling, while his whole countenance expressed the tenderest feeling, the most ingenuous sympathy! "Fear not me," he said, "fear not me, my children; stranger as I am you need not! Can fortune, can power, remove the bars which separate you? I have both, romantic as it may seem, I have no use for either, no pleasure in existence, save to promote the happiness of others; can I assist you?"

"No, most generous of men!" returned Montaubrey, "arbitrary power, a sense of duty, too exquisite in this lovely creature." "Lovely indeed!" returned the Marquis, gazing with admiration upon her, who blushed and

cast down her eyes, ashamed of having expressed herself so freely before him. "Fear not me, sweetest Miss Melrose," he added, "that I think is your name, your own heart, your own delicacy, cannot wish me more profoundly silent, than I will be! You and I, my noble young friend, shall meet again."

The ladies now returned towards them, who had been totally prevented hearing this interesting conference, as they stood near the door, and several parties were now passing it, in order to quit the house; the noise of whom, and the calling for carriages, &c., prevented any thing being heard, unless it passed close to the ear. Sir James Wilson was returned, with an account, that neither of the carriages was arrived; and their embarrassment encreased, as Magdalena was by no means sufficiently recovered, to return to the boxes: the Marquis understanding their difficulty, said, he had no doubt his carriage was waiting, as he had ordered it early,

having an engagement; Montaubrey offered his services to seek it, and returned in a few minutes saying, it was at the door. Sir James Wilson and Matilda returned to the boxes; the Marquis escorted Lady Piercefield, and Montaubrey took the hand of Magdalena. In the very short interval which passed, before they reached the carriage, she again entreated him not to throw himself in her way, as he had lately done, and represented the cruelty of rendering her difficult task, still more difficult, by these frequent meetings; he promised, if possible, to obey her, owned Lord Piercefield had told him she was to be at the theatre that evening, and trembling with suppressed emotion, placed her in the Marquis's carriage, into which Lady Piercefield had preceded her. The Marquis requested permission to see them safe, which having received, he stepped in after them, and they proceeded to Burlington Street. On their road, the Mar-

quis shewed them the most polite attention; he said, he should have the honour of enquiring for Miss Melrose the next day, and refusing an invitation to enter the house, immediately wished them good night, and drove off.

CHAP. VI.

THE next day the Marquis of Glenalbin, stopped at Lady Piercefield's door, to enquire for Miss Melrose, but refused an invitation to alight. Sir Eustace, gratified and pleased, by the attention of this noble stranger to his sister and Magdalena, called at his house the next day, and left a card, as the Marquis was from home; a civility which Lord Glenalbin returned; immediately after which they learned,

that he had left London, and was gone into Scotland; and thus they concluded, their acquaintance with the amiable Marquis would end.

Sir Eustace now became so extremely uneasy, at the state of Magdalena's health, and the strong effect produced on it by every little, and apparently trivial incident, that he continually importuned her to quit London earlier than she had intended; and, as the weather was still sufficiently good for travelling, to return into Cumberland, and hasten the period of their nuptials. He fancied the air of London did not agree with her, and in fact, the constant anxiety, and hurry of spirits, in which she had been involved, had much altered her appearance; and though she shrunk with dismay, which she vainly endeavoured to conquer, from the idea of becoming Lady Willoughby, yet she could not conceal from herself, that she was destroying all chance, not only of happiness, but even of quiet, by meet-

ing Montaubrey so perpetually. Every day she knew, would more and more expose her to this torture, as every day Lord Piercefield's attachment to Lady Isabella became more and more visible; it was indeed understood, that he had made proposals which had not been rejected; though Lady Isabella, wished to see a little more of him, before she entered into any absolute engagement. Under such circumstances, it was obvious, that the two families must be very frequently together, and unless Magdalena secluded herself entirely, she must continually meet Montaubrey, from the consequences of which, she foresaw nothing but encreased misery. Yet to return into Cumberland, before the time originally fixed, and as it might be considered, avowedly at the request of Sir Eustace, that their marriage might take place the sooner, was so totally repugnant to her ideas of delicacy, that even, had her heart inclined her to compliance, she would wholly

have declined it. As a middle course therefore, she consented to remove to Clifton, accompanied by Victoria, who detested London, and whose health also seemed affected by the air; the kind-hearted Mrs. Denbigh, most gladly consented to receive them, and Lady Piercefield and the rest of the party, promised to re-join them in about five weeks, and they were then to return altogether into Cumberland. Unwillingly Sir Eustace consented to this plan; he could ill endure to lose so long the society of Magdalena; yet some business respecting the money concerns of his ward, at this time particularly engaged him, and prevented his leaving London, to fix himself at Clifton, as he would otherwise have done; he was therefore obliged to permit her to depart without him, as he considered her health of more importance than any other object.

With a mixture of joy and anguish, Magdalena quitted London; now, she

thought it was indeed certain, she should never more see Montaubrey; though Isabella's union with Lord Piercefield, would so connect them, that with her, she hoped frequently to meet again. She felt the peculiar hardship of her fate, in being thus, in a manner exiled from London, and forbidden to participate with her friends, in the intimacy they were at this instant forming, with the only family for whom she was interested. "Yet," she thought, and her native pride kindled at the remembrance; "how bitter, how insupportable, had been the anguish, which Lady Montaubrey's pride would have excited, had I yielded to the entreaties of her son, and become his wife! If now she despises, she would then have abhorred me; if now she considers my very acquaintance, disgraceful to her children; how would she have rejected, how reprobated, the then lost and disgraced Magdalena! Ah, heavens! let me be thankful, that I braved not a trial

so insupportable! That I refused to drag Montaubrey with me, into that abyss of contempt and misery, which would then have been deservedly my lot!"

Mrs. Denbigh received her young visitors with all her natural kindness, and professed herself, what she really was, delighted with their return; she inveighed heavily against the vile air, and late hours of London, which she imagined had made such inroads on their health, and so changed their blooming complexions; she wearied herself with endeavours to please and gratify them, and would willingly have never suffered them to be an hour without some of her young favourites, whose smiles and attentions, so chearing to herself, she judged must be equally so to her cherished guests. But ah! she counteracted all these well-meant assiduities, by talking incessantly of Sir Eustace, giving him indeed only the praise he merited; but adding to it various details, of the manner in which

she imagined Magdalena would live, when she was his wife; and elaborate descriptions, of the wealth and happiness she would enjoy, with the *man of her choice*, so worthy of her, and so desirous of rendering her happy! Appealing at intervals to Victoria, for the truth of all she asserted, and half wondering at the coldness and constraint with which she joined in her admiration, of a man of whom she knew Miss Devereux had the highest opinion. Unnoticing the changes this theme, so painful to her young companions, produced in their aspect or complexion, she imagined she gratified both, while she in reality inflicted tortures. As often as possible they strolled away together, and pleased themselves by walking in the beautiful environs of Clifton. A clear frost enabled them to enjoy this pleasure, and the soft air so far mitigated its influence, as to prevent it from affecting them unpleasantly. It was now February, and in another

month, Sir Eustace, Lady Piercefield, and the Miss Arlingtons were to join them; they were to proceed almost immediately into Cumberland, Sir Arthur Maitland was to follow them, and the marriages of Magdalena and Henrietta were to take place the third week in March. The pure air, had, in great measure, restored the health of Victoria and Magdalena, and their absence from those objects, which when present, shook their nerves and tortured their feelings, had calmed their minds, and given them strength to prepare for the completion of those engagements, which though from different motives, caused the misery of both.

One day, while walking on the downs, attended only by Mrs. Denbigh's footman, they met a gentleman on horseback, followed by a groom in a rich livery; a single glance, served to shew Magdalena that it was the Marquis of Glenalbin, who also instantly recognized her, and eagerly dismounting,

gave his horse to his servant, and accosted them with marked respect, yet with an air of peculiar interest and pleasure. Magdalena blushed excessively, at remembering how, in a moment when circumstances had entirely thrown her off her guard, she had so wildly revealed, to an utter stranger, the dearest and most important secrets of her heart! But speedily she felt calmed, and re-assured by the mingled dignity and softness of his address, and the ingenuous candour of his expressions, so unusual in a man of his age, and one who had seen so much of the world; (that world, which alas! in general only serves to harden the heart, and infuse into the manners, even of the most polished, a shade of suspicion and artifice.) In the noble and open countenance of the Marquis, she read a heart, still pure in its native virtues, incapable of deceiving, therefore not fearing to be deceived. Her tranquillity returned, and she felt, that were

Lord Glenalbin still a stranger to her inmost thoughts, she could have confided them to him without fear, and with the most entire reliance on his sympathy and silence. Let no one object, that such confidence in a stranger is absurd and unnatural. There are characters which inspire it, on our first knowledge of them; they are rare indeed, but that they *do* exist, we could, if we dared, ascertain, by naming at least one living instance.

Offering an arm to each of the young ladies, the Marquis continued walking with them some time; his years, his high consideration in the eyes of all who knew him, and the correct introduction ho had had to them in London, rendered his joining them by no means an intrusion; and his sensible and animated conversation, mingled occasionally with soft and pathetic touches, of natural tenderness and feeling, soon made them both consider it as a real favour. The Marquis appeared pleased

with both, but on Magdalena his eyes dwelt with delight, and on her words he hung with visible enchantment. He asked her a few questions respecting her usual residence, and whether she were a ward or relation of Lady Piercefield's, to which she simply replied, that she had hitherto lived in Cumberland with her guardian; for, not daring to reveal her real affinity to Lord Ennersdale, she always disliked to name him as her relation, and indeed as much as possible, avoided speaking of him at all. "I left London," said the Marquis, "intending to visit some parts of that county, and to go into Scotland; there to see again, some places endeared by youthful recollection, and sanctified by tender sorrow! But at Bath I was taken ill, and have still that journey to perform, as well as to visit the more interior parts of the kingdom, where my estates lie. But it matters not when I go, for not a friend remains to greet me, and of all my youth, once promised,

the only vestige is a grave! A grave! where with anguish which almost destroyed me, I saw interred, all that my soul held dear! But let me not oppress you, my fair young friends, with my sorrows. Were you ever in Scotland, Miss Melrose?"

"Yes, my Lord," she replied; "I made a short tour there last autumn with Lady Piercefield's family; but the approach of winter obliged us to shorten our journey."

He seemed inclined to ask more questions, but they arrived at the door of Mrs. Denbigh, when declining an invitation to walk in, but requesting permission to call on them soon, his lordship re-mounted his horse and and rode off.

In the course of the next day, the Marquis performed his promise of waiting on the young ladies, and was received by Mrs. Denbigh with her usual hospitality. From this time, his visits were frequent, and that good lady

who was one of the class of persons who never see a young man commonly attentive to a young woman, without supposing his assiduities must arise from love, became quite anxious to ascertain which of her young friends had made a conquest of their illustrious visitor. "I hope," she said, "it is you, my dear Victoria; for he is so handsome and agreeable, that though he is older than you, I don't think you need to dislike him on that account; he appears not much older than Sir Eustace, and you see Miss Melrose prefers Sir Eustace to any body. It would be a pity if the Marquis should fall in love with her, though I must say, he seems to look very hard at her, and listens so earnestly when she speaks. But you know, my dear Miss Melrose, you could not give up Sir Eustace! Unless, indeed, you could prevail on him to give you up, and take Victoria instead; but perhaps, Victoria might not like him, nor you might not like the Marquis."

"Dear Madam," said Victoria, glowing with shame and resentment, "why must we suppose the Marquis is to fall in love as you call it, with either of us? To me, he only appears actuated by friendship and a brotherly regard." "Aye, to be sure, *a brotherly regard*; I don't like all that nonsense! I think, as the old song says, that "Friendship with woman is sister to love." It's all very well, my dear, for you to be on such terms with Sir Eustace Willoughby, because you know he is engaged; but if he were not, though he is so many years older than you are, and not so handsome as the Marquis, I should not wonder if your gratitude and regard for him were to grow into love." In this style would the good lady frequently expatiate, overwhelming Victoria with confusion and vexation, and trying the feelings of Magdalena with an unconscious cruelty, to which the most studied malice could have added nothing.

Day after day Lord Glenalbin called, and every day lengthened his visits,

and seemed to increase the pleasure he derived from them; frequently he expressed his delight in the society of his two amiable young friends, and say they had given value to a life, which he had before thought worthless and incapable of enjoyment; yet while he spoke to both, his eyes and voice pointed the declaration more particularly to Magdalena. Still however neither appeared to express the passion of a lover; but a soft disinterested kindness was visible in his looks and accent which attached her to him with a warmth far superior to any regard she had ever felt for Sir Eustace, and only inferior to, though wholly differing from that she experienced from Montaubrey. In speaking to the Marquis, her whole soul seemed rising to her lips, her very heart was visible in her countenance, and so complete was the confidence she felt in this most admirable man, that from him she never wished to veil it, though from the notice

and discovery of all others she shrunk with apprehension. On his part, he evidently sought an opportunity of talking to her alone; yet, although she observed this, it excited no discomposure in her mind; she never sullied the sacredness of that high esteem in which she held him, by even suffering her fancy to depict him in the light of a lover; in her imagination

"He sat 'mongst men, like a descended God,"

and the real affection she felt for him included something of reverence too holy to be associated with the idea of passion.

At length, the Marquis found or made the opportunity he sought, and recurring to the interesting moment when first they met, he painted with energy his feelings for the distress of Tancred and Sigismunda. "Ah, heavens!" he exclaimed, "too well could I enter into every expressive word, every tender regret of those unhappy lovers! Too deeply had I felt a similar

anguish, when in the bloom of youth, in the dear prospect of every happiness. But pardon me!—This theme is so sacred, that never to human ear have my griefs been breathed; and even to you, fair Magdalena; to you, the only object which has for many years shed a momentary sweetness on my unhappy destiny, I cannot yet reveal them!—— But what were my sensations, when (overpowered by the tragic scene, I would have left the Theatre,) I saw that lovely face, I heard that soul-subduing voice! That voice, which my raised imagination led me to believe called on *me*, on *me*, to save you! When those hands were expanded to me! I fancied, I believed!—— Great God, have pity on me! Let me not renew the madness of that moment!"

He paused, he struggled with contending emotions; then in lower and calmer accents, he added, "Soon lovely girl, I found, soon your unguarded artlessness revealed the cause of all

that soft distress; in the gallant Montaubrey I beheld the choice of your heart, and saw the love was mutual; but ah, I saw it was unhappy! When, alas, was real love ever otherwise? But enough. Will you not, sweetest Miss Melrose, will you not now confide in me the cause of that separation I heard you both so tenderly lament? In that moment of agitation, of sympathy arising from causes, which even you, my fair friend, cannot yet conjecture, I offered what possibly from a stranger you considered either as romantic absurdity, or impertinence. But now you know me better, will you not tell me, is it not possible, that wealth and influence almost unbounded, and for which, I alas, have no use, may, properly exerted, remove the obstacles which oppose your union with the finest young man I ever saw. Let no false scruples, no fanciful delicacy, restrain you; me you cannot fear; I would be to you as a father. Oh, had heaven

ordained me such a child! But no, I never was so blest; the cold grave closed on her I loved——Forgive me, once more; soon I will relate to you all my sad story." "Oh, my Lord," returned Magdalena, "would you were indeed my father! Sacred name! But alas! the hand of the murderer,—some dark, some cruel assassin, stole on the unwary step of my father, and dragged him to destruction. He died, my Lord," she added, weeping, "before I was born; my wretched mother soon followed him to the tomb, leaving me a little orphan, to a destiny so strange and so inevitable, as, if I dared reveal it, would make you shrink with horror; leaving me to expiate the errors, and lament the misfortunes of those who gave me being. More I dare not say; but be assured, most generous Lord Glenalbin, no wealth, no power can alter my fate; I have only to submit in silence. Montaubrey's I can never be. When our mutual at-

tachment commenced, a stranger to the extraordinary ties by which I was bound, I believed that a very short time would remove those slight obstacles which alone seemed to oppose our union, and did not discover my error till his merit had so completely won my affections, as to make it difficult, if not impossible to recall them! Yet that effort, that painful task must be mine; for in a few weeks hence I shall be the wife of Sir Eustace Willoughby!"

"Sir Eustace Willoughby?" exclaimed the Marquis starting from his chair, "then indeed fate is not tired of persecuting me! The gleam of sunshine, which I hoped would gild my latter days is withdrawn for ever. [Great Heaven! What a wonderful, what a striking coincidence! Farewell, sweetest Magdalena; farewell, for ever. Never more shall I dare to seek that soft regard, that fascinating friendship, which I flattered myself, would lend a charm to an existence long dark and

comfortless! To that dark, that comfortless state I again return. Sweet girl, farewell, Never, as the wife of Sir Eustace Willoughby, can I behold you more."

He turned to leave her, while his whole frame shook with restrained emotion; but laying her hand upon his arm, she said, "Why, ah why, my Lord, must you leave me thus? Do you know any evil of Sir Eustace? Is he your enemy?"

"Oh, ask me not! His very name! Yet, let me do him justice. Of him I know nothing but good. Yet, may I never see him more! I never can! May *you*, may *he* be happy! Oh, God! What scenes of misery, what hours of maddening anguish return to my memory! Farewell, beloved, sweet, and lovely girl; child of my purest affections, farewell!" He folded her for an instant in a paternal embrace, and rushing out of the room, was gone in a moment.

To paint the surprize, the consternation of Magdalena, would be impossible; it seemed as if Sir Eustace were fated to be her bane, to drive from her every one she loved and esteemed. Yet always candid and reasonable, she owned that he had in nothing been blameable, however unfortunately his very name seemed to contain a spell to wound her. Deeply she lamented the dislike of the Marquis to the man who was to be her husband; for she had pleased herself with believing they only wanted to know each other, to become mutually attached; and fancied in them a similarity of sentiments, which would be productive of pleasure to both; while, as a third in their friendship, she flattered herself with a degree of satisfaction no other circumstance could now bestow. She was also at a loss how to account to Mrs. Denbigh for the sudden departure of the Marquis, so strange and unexpected; for he had talked of remaining at Clifton at

least a month longer, and several little schemes had been planned which they were to have enjoyed together. From this anxiety, however, the Marquis soon relieved her, by a note to Mrs. Denbigh, excusing himself for quiting Clifton, without taking leave of her and the young ladies, on the score of sudden business which admitted of no delay. Mrs. Denbigh openly lamented his departure, and Victoria was really sorry for it, while in the mind of Magdalena, it had implanted the most serious regret, which rendered all the little pleasures he no longer shared, totally insipid to her.

CHAP. VII.

It seemed as if Magdalena, whose character was naturally open and sincere, were fated never to know the de-

lights of confidence, or to possess the power of revealing her feelings, even to those most dear to her; there was always something held back, something which she was bound to keep secret, and which destroyed the pleasure of her intercourse with every one she loved; such was now her situation with respect to Victoria; for unless she had explained all the circumstances of her attachment to Montaubrey, and the singular ties which bound her to Sir Eustace, she could not relate her conversation with the Marquis, nor its extraordinary conclusion, though it employed her thoughts so much, as to render her unusually silent and unsociable.

With anxiety and terror, she also marked the quick lapse of the little time which now remained, before she must return into Cumberland; and often she fancied it a frightful dream, that so soon she should be the wife of Sir Eustace, when it would be an absolute crime even to think of Montaubrey.

Victoria also concealed in her bosom a source of anxiety which injured her health, and destroyed her cheerfulness. She could not endure the idea of returning to West-hay, to witness the marriage of Sir Eustace; and venturing at length to object to the sharpness of the air, which she pleaded did not agree with her; she so earnestly entreated permission to remain with Mrs. Denbigh a few weeks longer, that Lady Piercefield and her guardian, though with some unwillingness consented, and Mrs. Denbigh was quite enchanted, to find Miss Devereux preferred staying with her, to sharing the bridal festivities. To compensate in some measure, for the loss she would sustain, the good lady assured her, that they should, as soon as the weather became settled, make a little tour which should include the coast of Sussex, and that she would afterwards herself, conduct her fair guest to Prior's wood, the seat of Sir Arthur Maitland in Kent, where after

spending two or three weeks with Lady Maitland, as her dear Henrietta would then be, she would leave Victoria, and return to her own habitation. This scheme met with the approbation of all parties, and Victoria's mind, in some degree relieved, her natural vivacity returned, and enabled her to endure with some composure, the sight of Sir Eustace's joy at rejoining Magdalena, and the rapture, which he sometimes could not restrain, at the near approach of the day, which was to make her his. Painful was the parting between the two fair friends. Victoria struggled with her grief, and endeavoured to support herself, with dignity and composure. Magdalena spent every moment she could steal from society, in earnest endeavour to strengthen her mind, and fervent supplications to that Being, who could alone support her, for power to conquer a passion, which she already considered as criminal, and to return the affection of Sir Eustace as he de-

served. Magdalena's whole bridal preparations, had been made by Lady Piercefield in London, and Sir Eustace presented her with a fine set of jewels. With the kind Mrs. Denbigh, she exchanged tokens of remembrance and esteem. "Ah, Magdalena," said Victoria, just before they parted, "how vain are all these splendid ornaments, or the superb equipages Sir Eustace is preparing! Yours will be a happiness, which such trifles neither add to nor diminish! With Sir Eustace Willoughby . . . . but why do I say this to you, who must be indeed insensible, if you do not feel all the rare happiness of your lot! Whose mind is above the glittering baits mere wealth can offer! So richly adorned, there is nothing Victoria can present, unless you love her well enough to accept of this," and she gave her a beautiful miniature of herself, set with fine diamonds. "When you return to London, Magdalena," she added with a half sigh, "pray give

me yours! Perhaps—the happy Sir Eustace seeing this little miniature, will accidentally think of me; you will not deny me one kind thought occasionally, will you, Magdalena?" She wept, but strove to conceal her tears, and stifle her emotion. Magdalena's tears would not be restrained, she clasped her arms round Victoria, and murmured, "Ah, Victoria, how little do we know, what constitutes or destroys the happiness of another!" Just then, Henrietta entered, and seeing them weeping in each others arms, separated and gently chid them. In ten minutes, Magdalena was in the carriage, and on the road to Cumberland. Their journey was marked with no particular incident, and they arrived safely at its termination.

Magdalena with deep emotion, once more found herself within the walls of Delamere; those walls which had witnessed her birth, the succeeding progress of her infancy, and ah! those later

scenes, which had so powerfully affected her heart, and left her memory impressed with indelible regret! With fixed determination she avoided the alcove, and those scenes which would too forcibly have recalled the idea of Montaubrey; but, alas, every day convinced her, that no adventitious aid was necessary to implant his image in her heart. Yet so nearly the wife of Sir Eustace, her firm mind, and fixed principles, might even now have conquered her unfortunate attachment, and have improved the high esteem she felt for him, into a more tender regard, had not circumstances placed him, just at this juncture, in a less favourable light than she had ever before beheld him, and unfortunately displayed the only fault he had, in a manner unusually striking. To Magdalena's mind the idea of the Marquis of Glenalbin often recurred; more and more strange his objection to, his apparent horror of, Sir Eustace, seemed, when she recollected,

that when he was mentioned in London, the latter appeared to be a total stranger to his name; she purposely introduced the subject, and said, as if by chance, while speaking of Clifton, that she had there met with the Marquis, who had renewed his acquaintance with Miss Devereux and herself, and visited several times at the house of Mrs. Denbigh. Sir Eustace asked if they found him as pleasing, on a more intimate knowledge, as they had thought him, when Sir James Wilson first introduced him to them, and said, he was quite sorry never to have seen a man of whom he had heard so much, and who as Count Lichtenstein had rendered his name so illustrious. Lord Ennersdale asked some questions respecting him, and having made genealogy much his study, seemed well acquainted with the pedigree of the house of Glenalbin. "The family name," said he, "is St. Oswald; I knew the late Marquis slightly in his youth; he married Lady

Jane Vavasour, and I think he had two sons; is this gentleman one of them?" "No, certainly," said Lady Piercefield, "for I heard in London, they both died before their father, and the title was for a few years dormant, but was revived in favour of the present Marquis, who was a distant relation out of the right line, and bestowed on him as an honorary distinction, partly at the request of the Emperor of ——, in whose army his lordship acquired great fame."

"He spoke to me," said Magdalena, blushing very much, "as if he knew, or had known you, Sir Eustace." "No," said Sir Eustace, "I never knew a person of the name of St. Oswald, or to my knowledge any relation of the Glenalbin family." "Nor I," said Lord Ennersdale, "except the late Marquis, and of him not much." Magdalena's blush, and the singular expression of her countenance, when she spoke of the Marquis, had forcibly struck Sir

Eustace. Disappointed as he had been by Horatia, his naturally unsuspicious character, had imbibed a shade of jealousy; while the high sense he had of Magdalena's claims to love and admiration, and the difference of their ages, made him dread a rival in every one she seemed in any way to distinguish; a disposition which a coldness of manner towards him, she could not disguise, (however, he endeavoured to suppose it only the natural timidity of her youth, and seclusion from the world) unavoidably encreased. He had at first feared Montaubrey, but having for some time seen nothing to confirm his suspicions, they had insensibly subsided; but now he again felt a jealous pang on seeing Magdalena blush, and look conscious of some particular emotion, in speaking of the Marquis. He teazed her when they were alone with questions, as to his age, person, and manners; what he had said of him; why she supposed the Marquis had known

him; with many other enquiries, to which her answers were at once expressive of high esteem for the Marquis, and an evident wish to conceal the tendency of their conversations from Sir Eustace; his distrust encreased; he pressed her to tell him whether "*this charming Lord Glenalbin*" had not made her an offer; seemed scarcely to believe her, when she answered in the negative, and felt of this imaginary rival all the jealousy which Montaubrey, had he known her sentiments for him, would have inspired.

The more he questioned her, the more she naturally became embarrassed, and he sometimes almost quarrelled with her, because she would not confess a passion for the Marquis, which most assuredly she did not feel. To all her other miseries was now added the dread of marrying a man, to whose suspicions she would be continually liable, since she felt but too conscious, that she did not love him well enough, either to be

blind to his failings, or to enable her to express that warmth of attachment, which alone could have quieted his uneasiness. Worn, harrassed, and tormented, she looked forward, not only without a hope of happiness, but scarcely with a hope of even monotonous and indifferent ease; for of that last shadow of content, she saw the jealousy of Sir Eustace was but too likely to deprive her. Henrietta engaged with her lover, Victoria at a distance, or had she been near, the most improper person in whom Magdalena could have confided, her sickening soul preyed upon itself, and the silent grave often seemed to her the only refuge in which her wearied spirit could have rest. The first pale flowers of the spring now appeared; far from hailing them with that delight, which in her childish days they used to inspire, (when, after a long winter had deprived her of her pleasant walks, and confined her almost wholly within the castle walls, they appeared

to her as the precursors of joy and liberty) she contemplated them with a secret dread, as the harbingers of that hour which was fixed to complete her wretchedness. In one of those solitary wanderings, which now became her only solace, she composed the following

SONNET.

Chill sweeps the breeze across the early bloom,
Which lavish Spring prepares in Nature's prime;
And from that breath it meets the fatal doom,
Which seem'd yet ling'ring in the hand of Time.

Those blossoms fade and fall! How well their fate
Pourtrays th' effect of blasting Sorrow's power!
And such, perhaps, shall shortly be my state,
And such Death's triumph in the coming hour.

Chilling Misfortune, like an eastern frost,
Falls on my heart, and withers each delight;
I mourn youth's cheering hopes for ever lost,
And slowly yield to the destructive blight.
Oh, heart, repine not at the stern decree,
But hail with smiles the stroke which soon shall set thee free!

On the 20th of March Magdalena would be eighteen. On that day, her

marriage with Sir Eustace, and that of Henrietta with Sir Arthur Maitland, was to takeplace; as the time drew near, Sir Eustace, grieved at the dejection of Magdalena, which he attributed, in great measure, to his own unkindness of manner and jealous doubts, threw aside his suspicions, and sought by every tender assiduity to revive her; she strove to appear and be contented, and to acquire strength to support the scene which Lord Ennersdale taught them to expect the night before her nuptials. He was evidently shaken by the efforts he made to prepare himself for the performance of those promises, by which he had bound himself to Magdalena, in the event of her maarriage with Sir Eustace. His pale countenance, deeply impressed with lines of thought and anxiety; the frequent sighs which heaved his bosom, and the encreasing agitation of his frame, gave evidence of the strong emotion with which he looked forward to a scene so trying, which however, had been for years the favour-

ite object of his life, and the idea on which he had dwelt with a pertinacity bordering on insanity. The secret conviction of his mind, that Magdalena did not love Sir Eustace, that in fact she lovod another, and that he was sacrificing her happiness to his own projects, did not tend to compose the tumults of his soul. But whatever were his present feelings, he had now gone too far to retreat; and as the only amends he could make to his injured and innocent descendant, he treated her with an excess of kindness which affected her much more than the greatest severity could have done, and made her almost contented with a lot which seemed to afford him so much satisfaction.

The nineteenth of March arrived. The whole family from West-hay were to dine at Delamere; the marriage settlements for Magdalena and Henrietta were prepared, all blanks were to be filled up, and they were to

be signed in the course of the evening; and the next morning, at nine o'clock, the marriages were to take place in the parish church of Delamere, such being the wish of Lord Ennersdale and Sir Eustace, that the real name of Magdalena, and her claims on Lord Ennersdale might be made as public as possible: He designed to declare them audibly and openly to all the persons whom chance or curiosity might lead to be present at the celebration.

With what agitation did the wakeful Magdalena see the approach of this eventful morning! The remembrance of all she had ever loved was present with her; she called on the memory of her parents, on that of her good governess, and on the still living objects of her heart's affections to support her mind, and strengthen her powers of endurance. Yet, more urgently, and far more profitably, she addressed herself to that BEING, who alone was able to assist her.

At the request of Lord Ennersdale, she drest herself with elegance. In the drawing room, where hung the portraits of the Earl and Sir Eustace, and where that very evening the picture of her mother was once again to take its station, Lord Ennersdale and Magdalena received Lady Piercefield, her two daughters, Lord Piercefield, who had come down to witness his sister's wedding, Sir Eustace Willoughby, and Sir Arthur Maitland, attended by the solicitors of Lord Ennersdale and Sir Eustace, who brought with them the necessary parchments, and were to witness all that passed.

At table, Lord Ennersdale exerted himself to entertain his guests, and Magdalena to maintain some degree of composure; but notwithstanding all their efforts, Lord Ennersdale changed colour continually, and Magdalena trembled, and was silent. The gentlemen remained in the saloon after the ladies were withdrawn, only long

enough to take a few glasses of wine, which seemed in some measure to have steadied the nerves and calmed the spirits of Lord Ennersdale. Shortly after his return to the drawing room, the Earl produced the casket containing the rich family jewels he had formerly shewn to Lady Piercefield, and which he had caused to be new set in the most elegant manner; with as much firmness as he could assume, he requested Magdalena would decorate herself with them; she complied, and Henrietta with pleased alacrity fixed them in their proper places. The flush which suppressed agitation had produced in her cheeks, gave a degree of animation to her countenance; and could the most splendid diamonds, and the envy of Miss Arlington have made her happy, Magdalena's happiness had been complete. The shades of evening began to gather, and Lord Ennersdale, impatient to conclude the scene while his strength and spirits sted, ordered the drawing room to be

lighted. He had before caused several new lamps and candelabras to be prepared, and the whole being immediately lighted, gave it the appearance of being illuminated for some great rejoicing. Every room in the front of the castle had been prepared in a similar manner, and even the long passages were lighted up, so that shortly the whole front blazed with a profusion of lights, unlike any thing that had been seen at Delamere for at least twenty years. Lord Ennersdale ordered the great gates of the castle to be thrown open, and that one servant should be stationed there, and another at the staircase, to admit without ceremony any person who wished to be a witness of the solemn declaration he was about to make; this, however, he considered a mere form, calculated to give the appearance of publicity to his proceedings, as it was wholly improbable, any person not interested in the business should think of intruding at such a moment. All these ceremonies and

stately observancies, which Lord Ennersdale declared to be usual at the betrothment of any member of the house of Delamere, redoubled the agitation of Magdalena; and scarcely could the supporting arm of Sir Eustace save her from sinking to the earth. Lord Ennersdale, who seemed in great measure acting from the impulse of a raised imagination, now ordered all the servants to be assembled, and the folding doors of the drawing room to be thrown open. Chief amongst the venerable figures whom the strong light in the anti-room made visible, appeared old Agnes, pale and trembling with emotion, yet every feature full of delight and joy.

"Agnes!" said Lord Ennersdale. He paused, and seemed unable to proceed. "Agnes!" he again repeated, and was again silent. "My Lord!" replied Agnes, stepping a little forward. "Go!" he said, "take lights, go to the chamber——where my daughter

died,—and bring hither the picture——the portrait of HORATIA DELAMERE." His tremblings encreased, he breathed with difficulty, and Magdalena leaning on the bosom of Henrietta, seemed suffocating with emotion. There was silence. In a few minutes Agnes returned, bearing, with the assistance of Joseph, the portrait of Horatia. She placed it on a table leaning against the wall, and withdrew behind the circle. Lord Ennersdale groaned inly, and hid his face with his hands. Sir Eustace cast one look upon the picture, and with tears streaming down his cheeks, clasped Magdalena in his arms, and was silent. The rest of the party crowded round the portrait, expressing by their words and gestures their admiration of its beauty, and their wonder at its likeness to Magdalena.

Recovering himself by a powerful effort, Lord Ennersdale now approached the picture. He rested one hand upon the frame, and standing erect,

though with his head averted, he said, in a strong and energetic voice:

"This portrait is the resemblance of her who was my only daughter, my only child, once the pride and glory of my life; how she forfeited my love, why her picture has been so long degraded and disgraced, why I have hitherto refused to declare the legal claims of her child, need not now be recited: Those who alone are interested in the story, know every circumstance. At length, my objections (whatever they were) to reveal the truth, are conquered; my promise is given, and I stand here to substantiate the rights of her daughter, of my virtuous and meritorious descendant. Approach, Magdalena!— Come and receive the reward of your duty, of your *obedience*, of an innocent life devoted to my consolation."

Magdalena with difficulty obeyed the impressive call; she advanced, supported by Sir Eustace, and kneeling at the feet of Lord Ennersdale, cast her

meek eyes towards the portrait of her mother, and beheld in imagination the sacred shade of that dear parent hovering over her, to bless and sanctify the determination which thus restored her fame. "This," said Lord Ennersdale, raising his clasped hands over the head of Magdalena, "this is the only child of Horatia Delamere, the legal inheritress of all my estates. Her mother was lawfully married; in this casket are the documents which prove it. Behold, Sir," he added, placing papers with a trembling hand, into the hand of Sir Eustace, "behold the certificate of her mairiage, authenticated by the minister of the village of ****, in Scotland. To that I add letters from him who was unquestionably her husband, addressed both to herself and me, ascertaining the time and place of their marriage, and an attested certificate of the birth and baptism of her child. That fact Agnes also can witness, and that she heard my daughter, when dying,

declare her marriage, and bequeath her daughter to my care, in which she has ever since continued; and that this young person is that child!" "All this I solemnly witness and attest," said Agnes.

"It now only remains," continued Lord Ennersdale, "that I declare the name of the man she married! Oh, hardest task of all! That name, so hated, so detested, must I at last endure to breathe? I vowed, solemnly vowed, never to name it, or to hear it named, till one fated moment should arrive!

That moment is come!

He was of a family, if not noble, yet not mean. By birth and education he was a gentleman. His name! oh, God! His name was Duncan Ormington!"

As if the very sound of that long concealed and detested name, though breathed by himself, had contained some spell of deadly power, Lord Ennersdale sunk upon a chair almost in-

sensible, the instant he had pronounced it; and Magdalena, by whom Sir Eustace knelt, supporting her trembling form, dropped her head, half fainting on his shoulder.

A solemn pause ensued. Every one seemed impressed with awe and astonishment, at this extraordinary scene, and not a whisper, or the slightest motion, disturbed the silence of the moment. At that instant a sort of bustle was heard at the door, which opened from the anti-room, where all the servants stood; Lord Ennersdale roused himself, as if to ask the cause, and Magdalena reviving, raised her head from the shoulder of Sir Eustace. Immediately a loud and piercing shriek from Agnes, who stood the foremost of the groupe, rung with strange wildness through the lofty roof of the apartment.

A figure advanced, the full light of the numerous tapers fell upon it; breathless, speechless, it approached Lord

Ennersdale, who, starting from his chair exclaimed, "Heavens and earth! has the mention of thy name called thee from the grave, or do my eyes deceive me? Hence! detested ORMINGTON, begone for ever! Nor blast me with the sight of one so hated!" Magdalena, who on the entrance of the stranger, had started on her feet, answered in tones of excessive emotion, "My Lord, my Lord, you are not well! Oh, Sir Eustace, this is surely madness!"

"No, no!" replied Sir Eustace, "it is Ormington! It is thy FATHER, Magdalena!"

"My father!—what!—he my father! Oh, happiness, oh, transport!" and she fell senseless into the arms of the Marquis of Glenalbin.

"Yes!" he exclaimed, "look up, my child, revive! I am indeed thy father! Ah, sweet Horatia," he added, turning to the portrait, "is thy loved shadow there, to smile upon the re-union of thy husband and thy child? Oh, still more

sacred shade of my beloved, which doubtless, at this hallowed hour hovers o'er us, look down from thy beatitude and bless us!

"Revive, my child, my Magdalena, dearly loved, even while unknown, thy father comes but to make thee happy!"

"Begone!" exclaimed Lord Ennersdale, in a voice almost inarticulate with rage, while his whole frame seemed torn by fury, almost amounting to madness. "Begone! Take her with thee, if thou wilt, to beggary! And may every curse . . . . ." "Oh, hold, my Lord," exclaimed Sir Eustace, "too much already has your hatred cursed him! Be noble, forgive and bless him, and oh, above all, bless and cherish your most innocent and unoffending grand-child!"

"Never, never!" replied Lord Ennersdale. "Is this the hour, which for years I have expected? Is it thus all my wishes, all my plans, are to be

for ever frustrated by that detested Being, that hated Ormington."

"Good heavens!" said Lady Piercefield, dismayed and astonished by the wonder of the scene, "what madness reigns? This is the Marquis of Glenalbin!" "Ah!" exclaimed Sir Eustace, "how wonderful!" "Wonderful indeed!" replied the Marquis, "that I should have met and loved my child, unknowing that she was such; that we should every moment have hovered on the brink of discovery, yet have parted in ignorance! But my whole life has been a chain of wonders!"

"Once more I say begone!" exclaimed Lord Ennersdale, "beneath my roof thou shalt not remain. Take with thee thy daughter; let her at once cast off all obedience to my will, all interest in my happiness. Teach her if thou wilt, to curse me! I care not! I never sought to gain her affection, never believed in her love. No! *the Horatia, whom thou did'st teach to deceive and*

disobey me, steeled my heart from ever believing more!"

"Ah, my dear Lord," said Magdalena, sinking at his feet, "and yet you may believe me! Even the re-appearance (as from the grave) of a father, shall not prevent me from proving my love to you, by every means in my power! I am still ready to fulfil those engagements which . . . ."

"It must not, shall not be," exclaimed the Marquis; "I alone, have the power of disposing of my daughter."

"What, Marquis!" said Sir Eustace, colouring with indignation, "do you deem me unworthy of a hand, which a very few hours would have made mine for ever? Have you any reason to suppose that your daughter wishes to be exonerated from the engagements subsisting between us?"

"Sir Eustace," said Lord Glenalbin, stretching out his hand towards him, "forgive me! I cannot now enter into many details, necessary for you to

know, and of which an extraordinary chance has made me master; when you have heard all I have to tell, I will trust to you, whom I know to be the very soul of honour, to decide how far my daughter's engagements are binding, or how far it is just they should be completed. In the mean time, this is no place for us; I am unused to feel myself an intruder. My child! you will not refuse to accompany your father?" "Oh, never let us be parted more!" replied Magdalena, "my dear, my long-lost parent! But ah! my heart is torn by contending duties and affections. My Lord! my dear Lord, will you not look upon me?" "No!" exclaimed the furious Earl, and would have spurned her with his foot, had not her father snatched her from her knees. "May I never see the more!" and rising from his chair, he rushed into an adjoining apartment, and closed the door with violence. "Will you, Sir Eustace Willoughby," said the Marquis, "will

you imitate the example of this violent, this vindictive man? Yet how can I hope for your favour or your friendship? Fate seems to have determined, that I shall for ever interfere with your dearest wishes, and blast your warmest hopes! Strange, that circumstances should thus continue to dis-sever two minds, which, with pride I say, nature seems to have endowed with the same sentiments, the same feelings, the same sense of honour, and of justice! Will you not give me your hand? Nay, you must, we will be friends; we will learn to love each other!"

"Ah," replied Sir Eustace, taking his offered hand, and overpowered by the sweetness of his manners; "Ah, my Lord, would you but make this fair creature the ministering angel, to heal all our wounds; the sweet band to link us to each other!

"Magdalena! have I then been deceived!"

"Sir Eustace," replied the Marquis,

"this is not a time or place, to discuss this most important point. Night approaches; I have yet a resting-place to seek for myself, and this unoffending child; driven by her grandfather's harshness, from her natural home, but not, thank heaven, without a place of shelter! Did all others fail, thy father's arms, my dear, should be thy shield, thy father's heart thy place of refuge!"

Releasing her from the fond embrace in which he had folded her, the Marquis now bowed with graceful majesty to the surrounding circle, and would have led his daughter to his carriage; but withdrawing her hand, she stopped, she lingered to embrace Lady Piercefield and her daughters, to shed a tear over the half withdrawn hand of the grieved and offended Sir Eustace! To throw her arms round the neck of Agnes, to sigh and weep at the sight of each well known object, by which she was surrounded, and which she believed she might never see again! Then

sinking beneath the variety of emotions which rent her heart, she threw herself into her father's arms, and was rather borne than led by him to his carriage.

CHAP. VIII.

SO wonderful had been the events of the evening, so sudden and unexpected the change in her situation, that Magdalena's mind was almost overpowered, and her very reason seemed at moments shaken, by such a succession of strange occurrences; she almost believed herself to be in a dream, and though supported with the fondest affection in her father's arms, could hardly be convinced that he really existed. By degrees the tumult of her senses began to subside, and she was able to re-consider, with some composure, the extra-

ordinary transition of her fate. Snatched in a moment from the house, which so long had sheltered her, spurned by the only parent she had till now ever known, banished from each memorial of her infancy, she could not restrain her tears, as she recollected this cruel exertion of Lord Ennersdale's tyrannic power! But ah! what balmy sweetness mingled with those tears, when she felt herself pressed to the heart of that distinguished Being, who from all the world she would joyfully have selected, as her guardian and her parent! When she remembered, that she was rescued from the fate so dreaded, the grievous ties which bound her to Sir Eustace; yet that her mother's fame was fully cleared, and . . . . . but she checked her fancy, when it wandered towards Montaubrey; so lately, so very lately, almost the wife of another, not yet quite certain that it was beyond his power or his wish, to claim her; her native delicacy forbade her to expatiate

on the probability, that she might be Montaubrey's.

The Marquis spoke little, but every word he uttered was expressive of the fondest affection for his lovely daughter. Neither was yet sufficiently collected, to admit of any detail of the manner in which he had at length discovered their affinity ; both felt they had much to learn, but the fullness of their joy, and the perturbation of their hearts, was yet too great to admit of much conference.

They stopped for the night, at the first inn which offered them tolerable accommodation. The elegant travelling equipage of the Marquis, and the servants which accompanied it in rich liveries, attracted the eager attention of the people at the inn ; while the fatigued state of the foaming horses, and the singular appearance of Magdalena, induced a suspicion, that the *fine gentleman*, and the *beautiful young lady*, were eloping to Scotland, to be married,

The lights which they brought, reflected by the quantity of splendid diamonds she wore, forced Magdalena to recollect the inconsistency of her appearance, and the wonder she must excite, in all who beheld her. The Marquis impatiently handed her into the house, and (occupied as his mind was) could hardly forbear a smile, at the surprized and significant countenances of all he met. The very instant they were in a private room, he made her take off all the jewels, with which the pride of Lord Ennersdale had adorned her, and sealing them up, prepared to return them in the morning.

"We want nothing of him, my Magdalena," he said; "had not the bounty of my sovereign, and the liberality of that great man, whom I have served, endowed me with far more than I can dispose of, we would together have sought some calm and humble retreat, and forced the haughty Earl to confess, that it was not for the sake of his rich

possessions, that I sought his daughter, or reclaimed my own. His estates must finally descend to you, since now your legal claims to them are fully established; but these toys, and all his personal property, let him bestow where-ever he pleases."

Torn so hastily from her home, Magdalena in the midst of her tumultuous emotions, must have been rendered painfully sensible, of many inconveniences, from not having even the power of changing her dress, although so wholly unfit for travelling, but for the considerate kindness and activity of Henrietta Arlington, from whom the next morning she received the following letter.

To *Miss Melrose.*

"MY DEAR MAGDALENA,

"I AM under the necessity of addressing you by the name you have hitherto borne, being ignorant what is

your proper style and designation; under whatever title however you may henceforth appear, assure yourself of my undeviating regard, and sincere good wishes.

"We remained at Delamere last night till a late hour. Words could not paint the distraction and confusion which the extraordinary events of the evening caused; some were loudly exclaiming, others overwhelmed with stupid astonishment! Lord Ennersdale at length consented to admit my uncle, and after we had learnt from him, who in the midst of his surprize and sorrow, retained some share of dignified composure, that your grandfather was somewhat more calm, we returned to Westhay, leaving Sir Eustace at Delamere, to lament the probable destruction of his long cherished hopes! And must it be so, Magdalena? The words of the Marquis last night, lead me to believe we have all been deceived, as to the state of your affections; yet artless

and sincere as I have ever thought you, what powerful, what extraordinary motive could have compelled you to deceive us? My mother and Matilda condemn your conduct in the most emphatic manner; Sir Arthur, who knows but little of you, doubts I have a confidence in you, which even the late events have not shaken. I am told that I love to differ from every one else, and that it is very unbecoming in me, to defend one who seems disposed to use my uncle so ill; my answer is, wait for his decision, he is too just to be biassed by personal considerations; if he condemns Magdalena, I will give her up.

"I sent Nelson this morning, as soon as it was light, to Delamere, to select such articles from your wardrobe, as I know you must want. She met with no opposition; your Jenny with tears, requested her to obtain your permission for her to attend you. Nelson reports, that Lord Ennersdale is ill; he is threatened with the gout in his sto-

mach: she heard from the servants, that he passed most of the night in conversation with my uncle.

"Sir Eustace is this moment returned; I will see him before I close this.

"The excellent man is fatigued and exhausted; he wrung my hand, and asked me if I knew where you were; I told him, I had made enquiries this morning early, and learned you had remained for the night at——whither I was going to send you a change of dress "I must see the Marquis, my dear Henrietta," said he; "I have reason to think Ennersdale has cruelly deceived me, and nearly sacrificed his lovely grand-daughter to his own wild dreams. Nothing but the certainty I feel, that his conduct arose from the mistaken calculations of a mind, warped in the first instance by insanity, could induce me ever to forgive him. I must see the Marquis of Glenalbin, and, if I can, Magdalena; ask if I may be admitted at the Inn, (whither we so

inhospitably suffered them to go,) at six this evening. I am now so exhausted, so incapable of farther exertion, that I must take a little interval to collect my scattered ideas.——Oh, Henrietta, how differently from my expectations does this morning rise!

"Will your noble father receive Sir Eustace at the stated hour!

"My marriage is postponed for a few days.

Ever yours,

HENRIETTA ARLINGTON.

The answer to this included, of course, the Marquis's willing acceptance of Sir Eustace's offered visit; and, at the appointed hour, he arrived on horseback, attended only by his groom. Magdalena felt some anxiety respecting the purport of this visit, and could hardly help fearing some hostile intention; yet there was nothing in Henrietta's letter which warranted such a supposition. Sir Eustace was,

she knew, too noble to resent offences long past; and of whom the cherished object was in her silent grave. And he seemed already sufficiently informed of the conduct of Lord Ennersdale, to account for the objections the Marquis had made to her alliance with himself. She retired to another room, during the conference, which lasted nearly two hours; nor did she, without perturbation, await it's result. She had been but the night before so publicly contracted to Sir Eustace, apparently with her own consent, that she was convinced, should she now reject him, if he persisted in his claims, she might, with seeming justice, be accused of a scandalous breach of faith, and of the blackest deceit. Would even the disinterested Sir Eustace consent to resign her, and fail to brand her name, with those epithets, the world would readily agree she merited?—Full of thoughtful anxiety she passed the time of this momentous conference; and at

the end of it, her father entered the room, and, taking her hand, said, "Come, Magdalena, come and let me lead you to the most generous, the most excellent man in the world!" "My father!" she exclaimed, in trembling accents, and hanging back with evident reluctance. "Fear not, sweetest Magdalena," said Sir Eustace, who had followed the Marquis; "fear not; I do not come to claim this loved, but ah, reluctant hand, in any character but that of your friend and brother! Far from me be the selfish wish of possessing even the envied treasure of that hand, unless it could bestow your heart, and ensure your own happiness! —Ah, Magdalena, why have I been so long deceived! Why, while seeking to promote your felicity, and win your heart, have I been the cause of your misery, and the object of your just aversion?—nay," added he, seeing her about to speak; "I do not blame *you*; the purest, the most sacred motives

compelled your conduct!—Ennersdale is alone to blame; yet even him I pity; how bitter is his disappointment; and, ah, how bitter mine!—Yet, I will learn to bear it.——I fully, freely resign all claims to a happiness I too well know I never merited!—How could I be mad enough to think, I could secure a heart so far above my deserts!—Yet, Magdalena, you will, I know, do me the justice to confess, I urged, entreated you not to be mine, unless affection dictated the acceptance of my hand. In what a strange web of mistake and deception has the over-powering controul of Lord Ennersdale enwrapt us! How nearly had it been fatal! In how short a time would its baneful folds have entangled us in ultimate destruction! He paused, and struggled with the emotion of his heart; while Magdalena's tears fell from her glowing cheek, upon the friendly hand in which hers was enfolded. "May these tears, Magdalena," said Sir Eustace be the

last I ever cause you to shed; in contemplating your happiness, I will learn myself to be contented—may Montaubrey—the happy Montaubrey!"——— He stopped, sighed, and relinquishing her hand, rose and for a few minutes paced the room in silence: then smiling, he added, "are you not ashamed, my Lord Marquis, to see me thus acting like a school-boy lover? At my age I ought to have more command of my passions, and years of suffering should have abated this tumultuous feeling!"— "Alas, Sir Eustace," said the Marquis, "I must grieve at the fate which has made me always a cause of unhappiness to you!—Can you, indeed, forgive me!" "Most willingly, most fully," replied Sir Eustace; "hours of reflection have calmed the pride with which I last night almost rejected your offered hand: henceforth, we are friends, and brothers; you will allow me to share with paternal affection your interest in this beloved creature?" "I

will, if possible, cease to love her myself," replied the Marquis, "if she ever fails to regard Sir Eustace Willoughby as her friend and brother."

Magdalena essayed to speak, but the words died upon her lips, and her expressive countenance, and offered hand, alone declared the readiness with which she ratified this agreement.

"Will you not honour me, my Lord, by coming to West-hay, before you quit Cumberland?—Will not you, Magdalena, take leave of my sister, and your true friend, Henrietta, before we lose you entirely?"

"Decide for us, Sir Eustace," said the Marquis; "will it be right to exasperate Lord Ennersdale by remaining in his immediate neighbourhood, and residing under the roof, of his most intimate friend, so immediately after disclaiming his authority, and contradicting his wishes? His fortune, his property, I despise, but as the father of Horatia, as the guardian and

protector of my daughter, though strangely he abused the important trust, I would pay him a little respect, and wish, if possible, to conciliate, rather than to wound him." "Nobly and kindly considered," answered Sir Eustace; "I yield to your Lordship's reason; assure yourself, all my influence shall be exerted to effect a reconciliation between you, nor am I without hope of ultimate success. At present his rage is unbounded, but time will calm it, and though he now denies that he ever felt any affection for Magdalena, (forgive me, I know not how to drop the familiar appellation) yet I am sure he dearly loves, and will bitterly lament her. In a short time, I hope you will both be my guests: I I shall by that time less sensibly feel the wreck of my long cherished hopes, and by receiving you at West-hay, as my dear and distinguished friend, prove to the busy world, that I am satisfied with what has passed."

The Marquis and his daughter returned their grateful acknowledgement for the kind consideration, and charged with the kindest messages for Henrietta, and the most respectful remembrances to Lady Piercefield, Sir Eustace departed, disguising the anguish of his heart under the semblance of content, and leaving Lord Glenalbin and his daughter charmed with his goodness and magnanimity.

The next morning the Marquis and his daughter began their journey to the metropolis, and as they travelled, Lord Glenalbin recounted the narrative of his life, in the following manner, interrupted at intervals, by various trifling occurrences, but none of sufficient moment to claim any particular notice.

"By my mother's side, I was distantly related to the Marquis of Glenalbin, and descended on my father's, from the ancient and respectable family of Ormington. My father was

an officer, and, though an only child, I inherited from him a patrimony, so small, as made it necessary for me to choose some profession: I determined on the law, and studied it at the university of Edinburgh. You have, I find, learned from Lord Ennersdale, in what manner I became acquainted with Miss Delamere, at the house of her friend, Emily Angus, whose family resided near Ross-glen abbey, and who was on the eve of marriage with a friend of mine, a student in the same college with myself, and whom I accompanied on a visit to Angus hall. When I first saw Horatia Delamere, Sir Eustace Willoughby was in England; and I had known her some weeks, and my affections were irretrievably engaged, before I learned that she was contracted to another. I ventured, humble as were my fortunes, to raise my eyes to the heiress of Ross-glen and Delamere; but I ventured not to disclose my passion, till an accident,

which threatened her life, threw me off my guard; the mask was withdrawn, and my ardent love at once revealed; the soft timidity, the lovely confusion with which she learnt the state of my heart, emboldened me to hope a return; and the dreams of youth, by flattering me with eminence in my profession, led me to believe, I might in time obtain her father's consent. But with what anguish did I learn there was yet another barrier between us! That she had for years been actually engaged to Sir Eustace Willoughby, who now returned, and tortured me, by hovering for ever, with the air of an accepted lover, over the beloved of my soul! Oh, Magdalena, you who have so well, and so wisely, limited a passion you could not conquer, and acted as duty prompted, though dragged by the contention to the confines of the grave, will you not blush for your less determined father, who fell a prey to passion, and drew with him his adored Horatia,

into an abyss of disobedience and misery!

"You know she yielded to my suit; you know, that unable longer to endure the harsh reproaches of her exasperated father, we fled together. Pursued by that furious, that vindictive father, who, at length, succeeded in tracing out our humble abode, we were, a few days after our marriage, forcibly separated by the the hands of his servants, who held, and even menaced me with blows, while they dragged my shrieking, my distracted wife, to the carriage of her inhuman parent!—'Heavenly Powers!' he exclaimed, while his eyes lightened, and his whole frame seemed writhing under the cruel recollection, 'can I forget that moment! Can I forgive the monster who tore her from my arms, in spite of her piercing cries, and our repeated avowals, that we were actually and legally married! Left to myself, yet held in confinement by the ruffians, employed by Mr. Delamere to

detain me, I bit the ground, I dashed myself against the walls of my temporary prison, and acted a thousand extravagancies, which my grief and rage prompted; but which the wretches who guarded me affected to consider as the ebullitions of madness.

"The instant I was liberated I flew to Ross-glen, whither, I had learned, the tyrant had dragged his daughter—Here I forced myself into his presence; I demanded my wife! Rage and fury possessed us both; he required me formally, and for ever, to renounce her; I refused; and insisted on her being restored to me. He insulted me—Heavens! how grossly, by the offer of a pecuniary recompence, if I would disclaim my marriage! Need I paint the rage which tore me at this infamous proposal! The servants who, by his order, forced me from his presence, and drove me from his door, alone prevented me from washing out the insult in his blood! Thank God, I was spared

that horrible, that irretrievable crime! I went from his presence, with every misery accumulated on my head, save that of guilt!

"I now retired, wrapped in a low disguise, to the humble cottage of Mabel Grey, the nurse of my Horatia's mother. Sheltered by the pious hospitality, which the very lowest of the Scotch love to exercise, I reposed my weary limbs on the coarse, but wholesome, pallet her kindness prepared; I partook her frugal fare, and experienced from her, and her husband, a delicacy of feeling for which loftier roofs might have been explored in vain. With native courtesy they desisted from all enquiry, respecting my name and state, from which they saw I shrunk; and with piety, almost parental, added my welfare to the devotional intercession, which, at evening and morning, ascended from their lowly abode to the courts of Heaven!

"At night I constantly wandered

forth; and climbing the steep eminence, on which the abbey rose, above the little glen where Mabel's cottage stood, I ascended a jutting rock, which almost reached the little casement of the room, where, I had learned, Horatia was confined. In vain I strove to gain that window, whence the faint rays of her midnight taper streamed; the star of my hope, and the guide of my dangerous and enterprising steps! By various signals I at length made her comprehend that I was near her; and though we could neither see nor speak to each other, the ingenuity of love suggested a plan, by which we interchanged some letters; and we had formed a scheme, which, we trusted, would ere long restore her to my arms. But, alas! an unexpected event frustrated all our hopes, and left my dear Horatia a prey to doubt, to fear, perhaps to the belief that I had voluntarily forsaken her!"

CHAP. IX.

"I WANDERED, as usual, one evening from the cottage of my kind entertainers, armed with their blessing, and wrapt in a coarse plaid, which, by assimilating my figure to that of the surrounding peasants, might mislead the eye of enquiry, and the tongue of rumour. I once more strained every nerve to reach the top of the toilsome ascent, over which the window of Horatia hung; once more I tried every device to gain a sight of her; a sound of that loved, that harmonious voice, which yours, my Magdalena, so closely resembles. Written testimonies of our affection, and a detailed plan of her

escape, we contrived to exchange; and by a variety of sounds and signals, concerted in our writings, we conveyed to each other the tenderest assurances of love and fidelity.

"It was the middle of July; and the dawn began to appear ere I quitted the sacred spot, which contained all my heart held dear; then sending my soul's warmest prayer to heaven, for her safety and our re-union, I slowly and cautiously descended the rock, by the side least open to observation from the abbey, and close to a deep cavern, in which I often concealed myself for hours. It was now high water; and a little vessel lay at anchor almost beneath the abbey walls. I knew this remote coast, and the little bay, which ran up by one end of the abbey, were often the resort of smugglers and privateers; who, if exposed to any danger, either of the sea or a chasing enemy, stood close in shore; and waited

till the peril should be passed. I stood a few minutes, at the mouth of the deep cavern I have just mentioned; and my eyes were attracted by the picturesque appearance of the little skiff, and the enchanting beauty of the rising sun; which now began to ascend above the horizon, and to scatter a thousand rose-coloured clouds over the brightening grey of the morning. I never shall forget that minute! A thousand soft, and nameless sensations, expanded in my bosom; and the hopes, which the correspondence of the night had raised, glowed warmly in my heart. I trusted, that ere two more suns had risen to illuminate that world of waters, I should see a similar vessel waiting for us, and fly with my Horatia towards another hemisphere!

"Such are the dreams of love!
Of love, that, with delightful weakness, knows
No joy, and no ambition but itself!"

"While raising my heart, in a fervent prayer, to heaven to bless our purposes and consecrate our union, I heard a heavy step in the cavern, behind me; I turned, but ere I could mark the intruder, a well-aimed blow upon my forehead laid me senseless, and bleeding at his feet! Recovering, at length, my senses, and my recollection, I was astonished to find myself stretched on the deck of the little vessel I had remarked; the smarting of my wound, and the chilling sea-breeze, having restored that animation, in the preservation of which no human being seemed interested. A rough gaunt figure, wrapped in a blue surcoat, stood surveying me with cold and brutal insensibility.

"As I opened my languid eyes, he exclaimed, 'So, ho! my young spark, have you had enough of spying?' Vainly I endeavoured to raise my head, from whence the blood, which my fainting had suspended, again flowed freshly;

but faint with its profusion, and sick with a thousand pangs, it sunk again upon the deck; and I thought I was dying!

"You grow pale, my child; and your soft eye reproaches me for the minuteness of the horrid description.

"Hardened as were the savages, amongst whom my strange lot had thrown me, it seemed they did not desire entirely to destroy me; for one of them, with rough skill, bound up my wound, and another poured down my throat some powerful cordial; mingling, with their care, oaths and execrations, and abuse of my ill-directed curiosity. I now found that these men were smugglers, and that they had mistaken me for some one deputed to watch them, an idea corroborated by my approaching the cavern; where, I afterwards learned, they frequently deposited their stores, though, in all my ramblings, I had never seen any of their gang before. After having stunned me with a

blow, which they imagined was mortal, they feared that, my body being found, might lead to a search in the interior recesses of the cave, which might occasion a discovery of their concealed treasures, ; they, therefore, dragged me to the sea-side, intending to precipitate me into the waves, which now at high tide lashed the shores; but perceiving in me some faint remains of life, a variety of motives impelled them to preserve me, and they rather threw than carried me into their skiff: these particulars I learned from a little cabin-boy, who was appointed to attend me with such coarse provisions as my new masters chose to allot for my subsistence. Their rough cares were prompted by a stronger motive than that of human kindness.

" A recruiting party lay on the coast of Yorkshire, raising recruits for a regiment in the East Indies ; the stiuation of the regiment was known to be such, that few voluntarily offered themselves

to fill those ranks, which disease had thinned. My conquerors knew, that by presenting me as an offending servant, of whom they were anxious to get rid, they should themselves receive the bounty-money; which, if I voluntarily entered, would have been mine: stripped, therefore, of every distinction which would have marked me as a gentleman; and habited in the coarse linen and half worn out garb of one of the masters of the vessel, (who passed for the crew of a small merchantman, laden with the usual commodities from the coast of Scotland to London;) and hovering between life and death, my body tormented with the pain of my wounds and bruises, and my mind racked with a thousand torturing anxieties, I was sold, as I may call it, to the serjeant of the recruiting company. All attempt at explanation or expostulation, was silenced by the vociferous oaths of my savage companions, whose tale was greedily listened to and received; I

was driven to a sort of dungeon prepared for those persons, who, having offended against the laws commuted their just punishment by enlisting as soldiers, and whom, lest they should desert, were kept in confinement till the vessel prepared to take them to the general depôt should sail.

"I will not grieve my gentle Magdalena, with a detail of all I now endured; suffice it, that for two months, I suffered all the horrors of imprisonment, contumely, and the association of wretches of the lowest kind. But every pang was swallowed up in the bitter remembrance of Horatia! Horatia left to disappointment, to despair! Taught perhaps either to believe me false and worthless, or to lament me as the prey of some cruel murderer.

"The stupid indifference with which I yielded to insult, was considered as a proof of my degradation and guilt by those about me; and I was watched, lest I should escape, or destroy myself.

At the end of the time I have mentioned, I, with many more, some perhaps, as unjustly detained as myself, were driven on board a vessel, which instantly sailed for Portsmouth. The strict caution given with me, rendered it impossible for me to speak a word to any of the superior officers, or to explain by what accident I was placed in a situation so cruel, and my appearance augured nothing in my favour; neglected, worn, and emaciated, my attire of the most sordid kind, and with a wound yet scarcely healed in my forehead, which seemed to mark me as a ruffian, I certainly looked like any thing rather than a gentleman; even Horatia would scarcely in such a disguise, have recognized her Ormington. What saved me in this horrible situation, from torpid despair or raving phrenzy? Alas! it was the hope never to be realized, that I should by some means ultimately escape, and return once more to the sole object of my wishes and my love! To

die, and leave her to suppose me faithless? Oh, insupportable idea! No, I struggled for life, and braved all the horrors of circumstance, that I might at least, at some distant period, clear myself of perfidy in the eyes of Horatia! Yet, at present, such was my appearance, I could not hope to interest any one in my favour.

"On our arrival at Portsmouth, we were instantly carried on board the vessel intended to convey us to India: Here I once more attempted to obtain my liberation. All were too busy, too much engaged in their own concerns, to attend to the tale of an obscure wretch, whose figure certainly completely contradicted the story he would have had believed. Obliged to submit with patience, and not possessing even the common necessaries for so long a voyage, I every day became more and more unlike the character it was my chief aim to re-assume. To write to any of my friends was impossible, as I

was not suffered to go on shore for an hour, lest I should desert; and I had not even a shilling, to procure the aid of any one in conveying a letter.

"We sailed, and after a tedious passage, we reached the Cape of Good Hope, where we remained to repair some slight injury our vessel had sustained; here all the crew were permitted to go on shore, and refresh ourselves with a change of provisions, which the crowded and unhealthy state of our ship rendered necessary. I also was allowed the solace of breathing a purer air than h[illegible] for months fallen to my lot, by the kindness of one of my companions, who had several times before assisted me with some comforts, without which, I could not have so long existed; I was enabled to purchase a change of linen, and to assume an appearance somewhat less squalid and disgusting. The regularity of my obedience, and the decency of my manners, seemed at length to obtain some

portion of favour from my superiors, and as my health returned, and frequent bathing, with better clothing, restored at least cleanliness to my figure, my officers treated me with greater kindness, and permitted me to walk more at liberty.

"In one of my rambles, my eyes were attracted by the person of an officer belonging to a regiment on duty at the Cape, whom I fancied I had seen before; nor was I long, ere I recollected him to have been a frequent guest at the table of my relation and friend, General Ormington, (who had died about two years before the period of my acquaintance with your mother.) After meeting him once or twice, I ventured to accost him, though the frequent repulses I had met with almost made me dread to attempt any relation of my unfortunate story. But the instant I spoke, he knew me, and enquired with astonishment, what brought me in a disguise so strange to the Cape of

Good Hope? My way was now plain before me. Captain Melbourne declared his knowledge of my name and rank in life, and his testimony was received without demur. My discharge was easily obtained, and the persons who had purchased me of the smugglers, received a severe reprimand from their superiors; nay, for the honour of the service, would have been immediately punished, had they not asserted, what indeed was very probable, that they had been themselves deceived. To my generous friend Melbourne, I was indebted not only for my liberty, but for the means of returning to England. He would have persuaded me to proceed to India, since chance had brought me thus far, assuring me that my professional talents would soon ensure me a liberal independence; but I confided to him enough of my story, to make him acquiesce in my ardent desire of returning. I did not forget to remunerate the humble friend, who by

his compassionate aid, led the way to my emancipation, and with a heart thankful to heaven for my release, I sailed for England, where ten months after my forced departure from Ross-glen, I once more safely landed.

"I immediately proceeded into Scotland, and under the disguise of a common sailor, I walked from Berwick to Ross-glen. I arrived late in the evening, and approaching the Abbey, gazed with impatient anxiety on its grey walls. No light streamed from its high arched windows; no sound disturbed the silence of its deserted courts, where the high grass waved in the breeze, and seemed to speak of desolation, save the murmur of the waves, and the distant scream of the sea-fowl. Involuntarily I called to mind, as I paused before the gate, those impressive lines of a bard of my country:

There's na light in my lady's bower,
There's na light in the hall;
Na blink shynes round my Fairly fair,
Na ward stands on the wall.

Black fear I felt, yet what to fear
I wist not; yet with dread
Sair shook my body, sair my limbs!

"At length, emboldened by my anxiety, I rang at the outer bell; twice I repeated the peal, whose echoing sound fell like the knell of death upon my senses. After some pause, an aged woman approached the entrance gate; she bade me begone, for there was no admission for beggars; that his honour and the young lady were gone south, and she had nothing to bestow. A few questions she answered, though suspicious reluctance was visible, in the glance she threw upon me. I learnt that Horatia and her father had left Ross-glen several months before, and were gone to Delamere. Her unguarded loquacity revealed, although apparently to a stranger of the lowest order, that the lady was ill, and suffering under the displeasure of her father. "Is Agnes gone also?" I asked in trembling accents; "she is my rela-

tion; I came to see her, not to beg." Agnes was gone also, and all the servants, and she and her husband had the charge of the house. "His return," she added, "she expected instantly, and if he found me loitering about the gate, he would dismiss me in a way I should not like.

"Heart-sick and desponding, I recommenced my journey, so impatient to find Horatia, that I staid not even to greet my kind old Mabel.

"I arrived at Delamere! Ah, can I ever forget that hour! Arrived on the very day which consigned Horatia to her silent tomb! Concealed beneath the coarse disguise I wore, I mingled with the funeral train; and the gates of the chapel being thrown open, as usual when any of the family are buried, I saw her grave opened! I saw the last receptacle which contained the precious remains of her, for whom alone I lived! Ah, God, I saw no more; but striving to

clasp it with a last embrace, I fell to the earth, and was dragged by some of the attendants into the chapel, from which, as you know, the cemetery is divided, and from thence into the court of the castle, where the fresh air revived me to a sense of my misery. I found, that by two or three persons, whom curiosity or compassion had drawn about me, I was considered as a sick mendicant. In vain, I tried to obtain a sight of Agnes, whom I called my relation; I was told that Mr. Delamere, since his last return from Rossglen, had forbidden his servants to hold the slightest communication with any of the neighbouring inhabitants; and that old Agnes, overwhelmed with grief for the loss of her young lady, was now attending the sick bed of her master. Some words were whispered of a rumour, in spite of Mr. Delamere's caution, of his cruelty to his daughter, in parting her from a young man she loved, who was since dead, and that

her grief for his loss had killed her. I sought to know no more, not the slightest hint of any infant left behind met my ears. I never had the smallest reason to suppose Horatia was a mother. Oh, if I had, not so quietly should I have left the hated walls of Delamere, have quitted the sacred tomb of her I loved! But what had I now to do? All was over for me, and since I was supposed dead, I willingly acquiesced in the report, and only lamented it was groundless. I wished for nothing Mr. Delamere could now bestow, nor had I any motive to publish my unfortunate marriage. Scarcely in my senses, I departed for London, where I sold all I possessed, and wishing never to be heard of more, I changed my name for that of Lamorne, and determined to go into the army of the *******, who was at that time the ally of England. Soon by the total contempt of danger which my indifference for life inspired, I gained dlstinction

from the generous Prince I served. I hated the very name of Scotland or of England, and studiously kept myself ignorant of all that belonged to either. Thus I never learned that Mr. Delamere was become Earl of Ennersdale, or that my relation, the Marquis of Glenalbin and his two sons were dead, leaving no issue. The sovereign whom I served gave me the title of Count Lichtenstein, and I seemed to forget I was a subject of England, till chance again threw in my way my old friend Melbourne; happy to discharge my ancient obligations to him, I acknowledged my real name, and the claims he had upon my gratitude. From him I learned that the family honours of Glenalbin remained unclaimed, and had devolved on me, although descended from the female line, such being the tenure of those dignities, as is often the case in Scotland. My royal master hearing these circumstances, insisted on my claiming my family honours, which

were immediately acceded to me. Of course, I came to return my thanks, and to take possession of my estates.

"We met, my Magdalena, and my heart instantly acknowledged your resemblance to my ever lamented Horatia; but ignorant of your existence, hearing that you were the ward of Lord Ennersdale, whom I did not know to be the same person as Mr. Delamere, no suspicion of the truth crossed my mind; yet, powerfully interested by your likeness to my wife, I joined you at the play-house, and when you turned to me, and with imploring accents besought me to "*save you,*" I thought I again saw Horatia, as when last I beheld her, she stretched out her arms as they tore her from me, and in the same words, the same heart-rending tones called me to her aid. Ashamed of the wandering of my imagination, with difficulty I regained my self possession, and assisted your friends in conveying you into the air. There I unexpectedly

obtained a knowledge of your attachment to Montaubrey.

"Imagine how great was my astonishment and concern, when I learned at Clifton, that you were engaged to Sir Eustace Willoughby! The very man whom I had so many years before deprived of his first choice; of the woman you so greatly resembled! I naturally supposed, that resemblance had attracted his affection, as it had done mine, though with different sensations and wishes. I fled, determined never to see you more, for to see you miserable, I felt to be beyond my powers of endurance. Neither had you been happy, could I have hoped Sir Eustace Willoughby ever would have considered me as a friend; had you been engaged to any other man, I should perhaps have been tempted to try, whether the knowledge of your attachment to Montaubrey, might have induced him generously to relinquish his claims upon you; but how could I, of all human

beings, venture to interfere with the concerns of Sir Eustace, or seek again to deprive him of his happiness. I, who seemed fated to be his bane, and had never ceased to regret the injury I had done a man so excellent. Involved in a maze of tormenting ideas, I returned to London, and renewed my acquaintance with Montaubrey. I found him a prey to melancholy, and hopeless of ever being able to rescue you, from the toils which fate appeared to have wound about you. By degrees, as we became more intimate, and he found me capable of lamenting his sorrows, and justly estimating his loss, he began to place more confidence in me. I devoted much of my time to him, and the warm praises I bestowed on the fair creature I knew he lamented, induced him at length to challenge me, on the nature of the sentiment which excited them; he half imagined me your lover, and resolved to dissipate an idea, which I felt to be injurious to the purity of my

love for you; I imparted to him the sorrows of my early life, and owned it was your likeness to HORATIA, (whose other name I withheld) which interested me so deeply respecting you. How did he start, and tremble at the sound! Question succeeded question, till at length the wonderful narrative of each was unfolded. I learned that you were really the daughter of Horatia Delamere, and the long-lost Ormington! I learned the strange ties which bound you to Sir Eustace, and hailed with tears of mingled anguish and delight, that filial sense of duty and affection, which led you to sacrifice your own happiness, to restore the injured fame of your mother. Determined if possible, to prevent the cruel immolation, I posted with all imaginable speed to Delamere. I found the castle lighted, and all seemed to betoken an unusual solemnity. I feared I was come too late; the castle gates were open, even the porter left to guard them, had been

attracted to the anti-room of that apartment, where a solemn declaration of your birth was to be made, and the contract of your marriage with Sir Eustace to be announced. Unheard, unseen, I mingled with the crowd of domestics, whose eyes and ears were rivetted on the scene within; I heard the aweful declarations of Lord Ennersdale; I saw my lovely, my devoted Magdalena kneeling before the portrait of Horatia, and I rushed ere it was indeed too late, to save you from destruction."

CHAP. X.

SUCH was the eventful narrative of the Marquis of Glenalbin, as he journied with his daughter towards the metropolis, where an elegant mansion lately purchased, was prepared for their reception, where he welcomed her as

Lady Magdalena St. Oswald, the heiress of his title as well as his estates; for such had been the mode in which they were given to him, that if he had no son, a daughter should succeed to them; the Marquis had with the title, assumed the family name of the house of Glenalbin, which with his long assumption of that of Lamorne, had completely with-held from public knowledge, the long forgotten appellation of Ormington.

Scarcely could Magdalena credit her senses, at the extraordinary, the unexpected transition! How different was her situation, from that of her early life! when held down by the severity of Lord Ennersdale, checked in her most innocent wishes by his harshness, her subdued spirit trembled, and no longer dared even to ask the name of her parents. Now cherished, idolized, every word seemed music to the ear of her father. Wealth and all its concomitants, beyond her most lavish wishes,

were showered upon her; and at length she was free from those ties, which rendered the late kindness, the shining gifts of her grandfather, but so many proofs of wretchedness, from which her soul revolted.

On his arrival in London the Marquis found a letter waiting for him from Montaubrey; the contents were as follow:

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

THE abrupt manner in which you hurried from me, after our late interesting conference, and the words you dropped as you wrung my hand at parting, convince me, that your intention was to proceed immediately to Delamere, and fill my soul with hope, that yet, should Magdalena's heart remain unchanged, Montaubrey, the too happy Montaubrey, may still be permitted to throw himself at her feet. But oh! should you arrive too late, should you find her the bride of

Sir Eustace, and this glimmering of joy, be like

"The lightning in the collied night,
Which in a spleen unfolds both earth and heaven,
But ere a man hath power to say, behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up!"

At this juncture, so replete with anxiety, so full of interest, will you not wonder at my quitting London, instead of waiting to see you the moment you alight in Park Lane. Oh, should Magdalena be with you! Nothing should have induced me to be absent at such a moment, but a request, indeed a decided claim from my friend De Morville; he insists on my performing a promise I made him, during a wandering tour we made together in the autumn, that I would be present at his wedding, which he has fixed for the 24th of this month. Did I consider your immediate return as certain, I could not, I would not, even to fulfil this unlucky promise, be absent, but as I shall hurry away immediately after

the ceremony, I shall perhaps yet be again in London, time enough to meet you on your return; that instant will seal my fate. Oh! once again I repeat, should Magdalena be with you! Adieu, my dear Lord,

Ever ever yours,

MONTAUBREY.

It was on the 24th that the Marquis and Magdalena arrived in town; they were therefore certain of not seeing Montaubrey till the morning of the 26th, and Magdalena persuaded herself, she was not sorry to have this short respite, to collect her scattered thoughts, and re-assume her composure. Hurried as she had been from her home, it may easily be supposed, that Lady Magdalena found some occupation in replenishing her wardrobe; though to establish one on a very extensive scale, a few hours and abundance of money, will in London fully suffice. A little incident occurred in the course of her

shopping, which furnished both her and the Marquis with some amusement.

The morning after her arrival in town, the Marquis accompanied his daughter to a highly fashionable milliner's and dress-maker's, in Bond street; but, as the detail of lace and silk was by no means interesting to him, and he had business in a neighbouring street, he left her there, with a footman to attend her orders waiting below, and taking the carriage, said he would call again for her in about half an hour. The mistress of this magazin des modes, and several young women were busily engaged in receiving her directions, for a variety of new dresses, &c., when two ladies entered the shew-room in which Magdalena sat, and desired to be shewn some articles they wanted. By their voices and a slight glimpse of their persons, Magdalena immediately recognized the dowager Countess of Montaubrey, and Lady Milbank; but the veil she wore,

and her being placed with her back to the sopha, on which the two haughty peeresses had thrown themselves, prevented them from knowing her. The articles they asked for were carried to them, but the mistress of the house, attracted by Magdalena's gentleness of manner, the large orders she was giving, and the sight of a well-filled purse, which the Marquis had put into her hand at parting, (with a smiling request, not to spare its contents) and from which she augured that rare happiness, a ready-money customer, still continued assiduously displaying the things she had requested to see. In the mean time, the ladies were examining bonnets, &c., Lady Milbank finding some fault with every thing she saw, at length, in a tone indicative of displeasure, she said, to the young woman in attendance, "Pray who is that, on whom Mrs. ——— is waiting so attentively." "I do not know, my Lady," replied the young woman, in a low

voice, "it is a lady who is giving very large orders." "Humph!" said Lady Milbank, in a tone which seemed to imply an opinion, that Mrs. ———'s services, might be more appropriately applied to herself and her noble friend. "I wish Isabella had come herself," said Lady Montaubrey, "for I dare say I shall not please her, in selecting a bonnet for her." "Is Lord Piercefield returned to town," said Lady Milbank. "No," replied Lady Montaubrey, "and I wonder at it, for I understood Sir Arthur Maitland and his bride were to leave West-hay immediately after the ceremony, and Piercefield was to come with them; therefore, as the marriages were to take place on the 20th, I wonder they are not come." "Well, I wish his lordship was come," said Lady Milbank, "for I really long to know, how all that odd story about Miss Delamere and Miss Melrose will turn out; of course I suppose the old Lord will tell the truth now." Mag-

dalena's heart palpitated, and she wished herself away, yet feared to move, as she could not endure the idea of the surprise her unexpected appearance would give them. She sat still therefore, hoping the two ladies would depart before her; but on a sudden her ear caught the voice of a lady ascending the stairs, and she recognized the incessant prattle of Lady Macartney. "Yes, child, I want to see some hats, and some caps,—and have you any fine French lace, and—bless me, here are Lady Montaubrey and Lady Milbank, —well, I am so glad to see you both, —dear, I have just heard the oddest story,—who do you think I met just now in the street!"

"Really I don't know," said Lady Milbank; "any of our Cumberland friends?" "An acquaintance at least; Mr. Mansfield; I stopped my carriage to speak to him, and finding he had a great deal to tell me, I made him come in, and have just set him down a few

doors hence." "Well, and what was his story," said Lady Milbank, "I suppose the account of the marriages at Delamere?" "Marriages! Oh, there have been none, but such a scene!" "A scene!" replied Lady Montaubrey, with some emotion, "of what nature?" "Why, Mansfield says, that the whole family from West-hay, and all the servants, both there and at Delamere, were called into the anti-room belonging to the great drawing-room, and there the old Lord made a long speech, and declared Miss Melrose was his grand-daughter and heiress, and the marriages by special licence were just going to take place; Sir Eustace and his bride were standing before Mr. Malcalm, and he was beginning to read the service, when all on a sudden, a gentleman rushed into the room, snatched Miss Melrose's hand away, and said she was either his wife, or promised to him, I don't know which, and in spite of the old Lord, and Sir Eustace, car-

ried her off in triumph." "A gentleman!—good heavens!—what gentleman," said Lady Montaubrey, in faint accents, does not Mansfield know who it was?" "When did Montaubrey leave town?" asked Lady Milbank eagerly. "On the nineteenth, I believe." "And when did all this happen, Lady Macartney?" "Oh, I don't exactly know, I forgot to ask Mansfield; but it is certainly true, for Mansfield saw the runaways himself, that very evening at an inn where they stopped; he had not heard the story then, and wondered to see Miss Melrose full dressed, and covered, he says, with diamonds; at first he thought she was married, and that Sir Eustace was with her; but he says, he saw the gentleman hand her into the house, the people all staring, and the carriage had a coronet and supporters." "Good heavens!" again exclaimed Lady Montaubrey, "but did Mansfield see the gentleman's face;" "Oh, yes, and he says he was not very

young; and, as his great coat flew open, he saw a very fine star on his side!"

"Oh, then, it could not be!" said Lady Montaubrey; and Magdalena easily imagined, that she had concluded her son was the person who had carried off Sir Eustace's bride.

"Well, what a strange story," said Lady Milbank; "what, I suppose Miss Henrietta Arlington was not married either?"

"Oh, no, for Lady Piercefield fell into fits; the old lord, they say, is raving mad; and I should not wonder if Sir Eustace was killed, for Mansfield says, he met him the next evening, riding full gallop, with only a groom, and pistols in his bolsters, to the inn where the fugitives had passed the night!"

"Bless me, how shocking," said Lady Milbank; "what confusion; well, I always thought that little Melrose an artful girl!"

"Thank heaven," said Lady Mont-

aubrey; "I never would hear of Isabella's intimacy with her."

"Aye," said Lady Macartney; "and Mansfield says, to his certain knowledge, she had a famous flirtation with Lord Montaubrey."

"Pshaw," said Lady Montaubrey, peevishly; "Montaubrey understood himself better, I am sure, than ever to think of her!"

"Oh, no doubt, seriously," answered Lady Macartney; "but your ladyship knows, young men will flirt."

"Well," said Lady Montaubrey, "we shall hear the whole from Piercefield."

"Oh, I dare say," said Lady Milbank, with a cold sneer; "the young lady will be sufficiently celebrated ere long!"

Magdalena had by this time completed her purchases, and requesting, in a low voice, to know their amount, sat impatiently expecting the return of

her father; yet timidly shrinking from the discovery which must then take place, if the three ladies should not have departed before his arrival.

"Well," said Lady Montaubrey; "I shall forget Isabella's bonnet, in listening to this story of her *ci-devant* favourite. Do you think this will do, Lady Milbank?"

"Dear, its pretty," said Lady Macartney; "shall I try it on, and then your ladyship will be better able to judge, if it will suit Lady Isabella."

Magdalena could not forbear smiling at the idea; and a suppressed laugh from Lady Milbank, marked her sense of the ridicule. Unconscious, however, of the absurdity, Lady Macartney now walked to a mirror, before which Magdalena was sitting, and put on a head-dress, only calculated for a very young and pretty face; in which, of course, she made a very grotesque appearance. "Oh, its hideous!" she exclaimed;

"don't have it, Lady Montaubrey; I I am sure Lady Isabella would not like it"

"Indeed, Ma'am," said the mistress of the house, "I do not think Lady Isabella would object to it; it is extremely fashionable, and remarkably becoming to a *very* young lady. If *you*, Ma'am," she added, turning to Magdalena, "would have the goodness to try it, I think you would find it exactly suited to you."

"Excuse me," said Magdalena, in a very low voice; and bending her head forward, with a wish of concealment, so evident, that Lady Macartney's curiosity was awakened, and she said, "Oh, do, pray Ma'am, try it; I am sure, you will think like me, it is hideous;" and with that familiarity, which she fancied the extreme of good-breeding, Lady Macartney would herself have assisted in removing the head-dress of Magdalena.

"Excuse me, Ma'am," said Magdalena, drawing back with some agitation; "I have completed my purchases, and expect my carriage immediately."

"Dear me! Sure! Bless me! I have certainly heard that voice before!" said Lady Macartney, peeping under her bonnet.—"My gracious! if it is not Miss Melrose herself!"

"Who, who!" exclaimed the two peeresses, starting up, while the people of the house stood gazing with surprise——"Why, its Miss - Miss Melrose——Lord, my dear—bless me—did you hear the odd story I have just been telling about you?"

"Yes, Ma'am," said Magdalena, rising with dignity, and throwing back her veil, "*all of it!*"

"Dear, well, bless me; I dare say Mansfield has been telling me a thousand lies; has not he, my dear?"

"A few!" said Magdalena, with an enchanting smile——

"What, then, I dare say, you really are married?" "No, I am not," replied Magdalena, blushing.

"No!——and did you come to town with——with Lady Maitland?" "No, Ma'am."

"With Lady Piercefield, perhaps?" "No, Ma'am!"

"No!– why, to be sure, you did not come alone!" "No, Lady Macartney, I came with *my father!*"

"With your father! Dear, how odd! La! I thought he was dead!" "I am happy to say, that is not the case!" said Magdalena, who could not help smiling at this string of interrogations; though her cheeks glowed when she caught the eyes of Lady Montaubrey, who stood gazing upon her; while Lady Milbank, with a countenance expressive of cold contempt, also encreased her embarrassment with a stedfast stare.

"Well!" continued Lady Macartney; "I never heard any thing so odd—

and this father, my dear——is he——is it a *good thing* for you, his coming back, after being gone so long?"

Lady Montaubrey seemed to shrink with dislike from the coarse question, and gently touching her elbow said, in a low voice, "Oh, Lady Macartney!"

Magdalena turned away with dignified composure, though pleased at the timely interference of one, whom she yet hoped to make her friend; and calmly taking her account, which was now ready, discharged its large total; and received, with the thanks of the milliner, a request to know where the things should be sent. "My father will, I hope, be here in a minute with the carriage," said Magdalena; "and though my purchases are rather numerous, he will, I doubt not, allow them to be placed in it."

Lady Macartney looked disappointed; for she had hoped to learn the

name and designation of this newly found father, by the direction given with the packages. At that moment another of the shop girls came into the room, and addressing Magdalena with great respect, said, her ladyship's father was returned, and waiting for her; and ere she could reach the door the Marquis appeared at it, with a request to know if he might be admitted.

"I am quite ready, my lord," said Magdalena, while the three ladies stood in silent astonishment.

"I fear, my love, I have kept you waiting," said the Marquis; "have you completed your purchases?"

"Yes, my lord, entirely!" "Do you want any more money, my dear?"—"Oh, my dear father, how extravagant you must think me! I have not spent half you gave me!"

"Nay, then, I don't believe you have purchased half the things you ought. Here's a pretty hat; why don't you

have that," said the Marquis, pointing to that Lady Macartney had tried; then perceiving Lady Montaubrey, he bowed and addressed her.

"Who would have thought of seeing *you* here, Marquis!" said her Ladyship.

"Why, no one, certainly," replied he, laughing; "who did not know I had lately discovered a daughter who leads me after her any whither!"

"Is that young lady really your daughter, my lord?" asked Lady Montaubrey, in a low voice, and colouring excessively.

"Yes, madam, my own and only daughter," replied the Marquis. Then turning to Magdalena, he said, "My love, are you ready." And receiving her assent, he bowed with dignity to the ladies; and Magdalena courtseying to Lady Macartney, gladly gave her hand to her father, and was led by him to the carriage which waited, and

which the ladies could not avoid seeing as it dashed away from the door.

The Marquis was much amused by her account of what had passed; and not less, when a day or two afterwards Lady Milbank and Lady Macartney left their cards for Lady Magdalena St. Oswald.

In the evening of that day Montaubrey returned, having travelled with the utmost expedition to reach town.—Montaubrey! Ah, fate, Magdalena felt, had indeed relented, when it brought Montaubrey to her feet!—an accepted and acknowledged lover.—Her rank and fortune would now remove those obstacles Lady Montaubrey had urged against her, and render her, in the estimation of all, worthy of being the sister of Isabella.

Great was the delight of the marquis in witnessing the rapture of his favourite young friend, and the more composed, but heart-felt felicity, of his

beloved daughter, when they met for the first time, with no anxious fear of discovery, no insurmountable pang of conscious impropriety, no painful fear of separation, to counterbalance their happiness in meeting! Yet, his pride would not allow of any positive engagement between them, till the Dowager Countess should have marked her approbation of the connection, by visiting, and selecting the acquaintance of Lady Magdalena.

Powerful are the spells of birth and riches! The same creature, who, as Magdalena Melrose, had been rejected with contempt, by Lady Montaubrey, even as the acquaintance of her children, she now eagerly sought, and hailed with delight, the kind embrace in which she saw her hold the fair and affectionate Isabella; who, however, somewhat warped by fashion, and half renouncing the romantic dreams of fancy, which first led her to select, as

a friend, the nameless Magdalena, yet still felt the power of early affection, and delighted in the sister she hoped Montaubrey would shortly give her. Hours they spent in sweet recollections of their first acquaintance, and retraced again, with delight, those hours, from the remembrance of which they had all lately shrunk with anguish and dismay.

One only cloud overshadowed the felicity of Magdalena; her heart could not think of Lord Ennersdale without a pang; she remembered him only as the protector of her infancy, as the parent of her mother, who, on her death-bed, with pious energy had appealed to herself to console his closing days by her attentions and obedience! Ardently she wished to be reconciled to him; and to see her father received as a friend at Delamere.

"Yet, why," she said, "should I alone of all the world expect pure and

unmixed felicity? Great, indeed, have been the unhoped-for blessings of my lot. My father!—and such a father restored! The fame of my mother cleared! The sacrifice, so greatly dreaded, at length averted! Repine not, then, oh heart!—Repine not, that one only comfort is denied thee!"

"And does Magdalena," said Montaubrey, "omit, amongst her sources of joy, the joy her smile imparts to me? The sweet hope, that together we may pass a long life of such felicity as rarely falls to the lot of mortals! that my mother will be her mother, my sister her sister! Will not these tender ties console her for the loss of a man who was to her a morose and gloomy tyrant? Whose bitter reproaches and cruel exertion of power, deprived the mother she laments of life, and drove her noble father into exile!"

"Oh, greatly," replied Magdalena, "would the blessings you enumerate

repay the loss of almost every other earthly good! Think me not, Reginald, insensible to the possession of happiness, for which I have sighed so long; but, on the other hand, let us not steel our hearts, by recollecting the faults of Lord Ennersdale. Who ever was without a fault? All whom we most love, most venerate, have erred! *Our* errors, my dear friend, though we thought them venial, might and would, but for the unexpected return of my father, have involved us in years of misery and regret! Lord Ennersdale is old, is friendless.—Ah, Reginald! Refuse him not the tear I must shed for his sorrows, and even for his disappointments!"

Could Reginald fail to love better than ever a creature so free from every vindictive sentiment, so open to every grateful impression?

A letter from Lady Maitland informed Magdalena, that she had been mar-

ried about a week; the wedding had been solemnized as privately as possible; and Sir Eustace had supported a scene, which must have forcibly reminded him of his own disappointment, with serenity and composure. After dinner the first toast he had proposed after the health of the bride and bridegroom, was that of the Marquis of Glenalbin and Lady Magdalena St. Oswald, with a view to prove to the small company assembled, and to the attendants, that he considered them as friends, and retained not unpleasant impressions of their conduct. "Lord Ennersdale," she added, "is ill and dejected; he has returned to his old habits of life; forbids his servants to hold any intercourse, even with ours, and admits no one within his gates except my uncle; who, moved by the memory of their forme friendship, spends much of his time with this greatly erring man. It is the most earnest wish of Sir Eu-

stace to see you restored to Lord Ennersdale's affections; and he hints a fear that the tumult of his mind, and the loose he gives to his violent passions, will, once more, be too much for his reason! Poor man! What right had he to expect, that nothing was ever to thwart his wishes, that all created nature was to obey his bidding? From the destructive indulgence of similar ideas, to which our sweet Victoria was but too much inclined, she has happily been rescued by early disappointment, and friendly counsel: she received the intelligence of those extraordinary changes which have set Sir Eustace at liberty with tolerable equanimity; how she will conduct herself when they meet I do not know, but that will not be for at least some weeks; Sir Arthur and myself are going immediately into Kent; we shall take Victoria with us, and pass through London on purpose to see you. When

are you to be married? Sir Eustace has confided to me your whole story; I suspected part of it long ago."

Of immediate marriage Magdalena had no thought. It had been so generally understood, that she was to be Lady Willoughby, that she thought there would be a degree of indelicacy in a precipitate union with another; she wished to shew the world, that Sir Eustace, and his family, still continued her friends; and brought no occasion of levity or falsehood against her. To these reasons Montaubrey unwillingly yielded; and the Marquis fondly desired to retain his daughter under his own care, for at least some weeks. Lord Piercefield still continued his attentions to Lady Isabella; and it was understood their marriage was to take place before the birth-day. In addition to the reasons already stated, for delaying that of Montaubrey and Magdalena, the marquis wished that she

should be presented at court, by her maiden name; that every possible publicity should be given to the legality of her claims on his estates and titles; and to his marriage with Miss Delamere.

Sir Arthur and Lady Maitland, and Miss Devereux, remained a week at the Marquis of Glenalbin's, in their way into Kent; Lady Piercefield, and Miss Arlington, being still at West-hay, with Sir Eustace.

Victoria, once more the gay, the animated Victoria, charmed them all by her vivacity; and the sallies of her wit, which the remembrance of sorrow had divested of all personality.

Henrietta did not choose to be presented till her mother should be in London to introduce her; she left London, therefore, the second week in May, a few days after the marriage of her brother and Lady Isabella Aubrey, accompanied by Sir Arthur and Victoria.

On the fourth of June, Lord and Lady Piercefield, and Lady Magdalena St. Oswald, were presented, and most graciously received. Montaubrey's love, and his mother's pride, almost equally gratified by the praises bestowed on the elegance, splendour, and beauty of the fair Magdalena; a part of whose romantic story having transpired, rendered her an object of no common interest.

For the next evening they were all engaged, to attend an immense party, at Lady Montaubrey's, the first she had given in honour of her daughter's marriage. Montaubrey dined quietly at the Marquis's; they had no other company; and Reginald murmured at the necessity of spending an evening in a crowd; which, otherwise, he might have passed free from interruption at Magdalena's side; she had, however, just retired to her dressing-room, when the sudden stopping of a carriage, and a loud knocking at the door, announced

the arrival of some unexpected visitor. In five minutes afterwards, the Marquis hastily approached the door of his daughter's apartment, and rquested to speak to her as soon as possible; surprised, and somewhat alarmed, by the tone of his voice, she staid not to complete her dress, but impatiently throwing over her a morning robe, joined him in the anti-room; his looks were full of surprise, and he appeared considerably agitated.

"What is the matter, my dearest father?" said Magdalena.

"Be not alarmed, my Magdalena," answered the Marquis; "——an unexpected visitor!——Intelligence of importance—"

"Ah, from Lord Ennersdale!" exclaimed Magdalena, pale and almost breathless.—"Oh, do not tell me he is dead, and died without forgiving me!"

"No, my love, no," replied the Marquis; "he is not dead, but very ill; Sir

Eustace Willoughby is in the next apartment!"

"Sir Eustace! Ah, has he seen Montaubrey?" "Yes, and behaved like himself; disinterestedly, nobly!"

"Thank Heaven!" replied Magdalena, clasping her hands, while the colour terror had displaced, rose again to her cheeks; "but, where, my father, where is this excellent man?"

"Come to him, Magdalena," said the Marquis; "he has tidings of importance for you; he has travelled post from Cumberland. To me that man appears great, almost beyond the power of any other mortal to imitate." He gave her his hand, and led her to the room where they had dined.

Sir Eustace, agitated and exhausted, had thrown himself upon a sopha; but, seeing Magdalena, rose instantly, and approached her. A sudden colour flushed upon his cheek, and his eyes sparkled, with that delight her pre-

sence seemed always able to inspire. He looked as if he had, for the instant, forgotten she was no longer his own, his affianced Magdalena. Recovering himself, he gently took the hand, which she, with feelings of grateful affection, extended to him, and respectfully pressed it to his lips.

"Well, Magdalena," he said, with a forced smile; "forgive the unwelcome messenger, who comes to tear her from her peaceful home, from the delights which surround her? Lord Ennersdale is ill——is dying! Remorse at length pierces his heart; he calls to mind all the cruel, the tyrannical acts, by which he destroyed his daughter's peace, and shortened her life! Nor is he less sensible, how nearly he had also sacrificed you, sweet Magdalena, to his own indulged and wayward passions! He entreats you to come to him; he entreats to see your father; he entreats, also, to see—Lord Montaubrey!

Amongst his other trespasses, he reckons the ingratitude with which he repaid the exertions of that gallant young man in saving his life. He would have you all forgive him; all, if possible, bless him; who feels he has but too much deserved your reprobation! Will you go, Lady Magdalena?"

"Oh, instantly, this moment," she replied; "let us fly! Surely, he will not die before we arrive! You do not think, Sir Eustace, he will be dead before we come?"

"No—no—I hope not! I trust not," he replied, affected by the sweet earnestness of her manner, so characteristic of the gentleness and goodness of her nature.

"How soon can you be ready, Magdalena?" asked the Marquis.

"Directly, my Lord! in five minutes; you will go with me, and———" She stopped and blushed; for, to mention

Montaubrey in the presence of Sir Eustace, she feared would be considered as an insult; interpreting, however, the hasty glance, which she threw around, in search of Reginald, Sir Eustace calmly said, "Lord Montaubrey has this instant left the room; he has flown to his mother's to change his dress; and—he has also another business to execute, ere he can return to accompany us. It will probably be two hours before he can arrive."

"My carriage, also, must be prepared," added the Marquis; "Sir Eustace requires refreshment; he is exhausted; in two hours, however, we will set out."

Magdalena dared not ask, what was the business which would detain Montaubrey so long; the expression of Sir Eustace's countenance, as he spoke, seemed to forbid all question; and, though lamenting the delay, she could only acquiesce in its necessity. Her

preparations were speedily made; her servant was to attend her. Excuses were sent to Lady Montaubrey; and at ten o'clock, in the evening she stepped into her father's travelling carriage, with him and her maid; and followed by Montaubrey and Sir Eustace, in the carriage of the latter she once more found herself on the road to Cumberland. Out-riders were sent forward, to provide relays of horses; and in the least possible time they arrived at the gates of Delamere castle.

"Surely," thought Magdalena; "the extraordinary reverses of my fortune will never have an end! Will fate ever permit me to taste repose and security?"

In the hall they were met by Doctor Parry and Mr. Malcolm, to whose pious counsels, Sir Eustace had informed them, the stern, unbending soul of Lord Ennersdale, had at length yielded; and by whom he had been guided

to the knowledge of that repentance, and reparation of the wrongs his fiery passions had inflicted, which christianity demands. Hitherto he had heard with indifference and insensibility, the holy doctrines of that pure religion, which made no allowance for his pride, and forbade his vindictive inflexibility. But the approach of death inspired new ideas. On the confines of eternity, his rebellious heart began to perceive, how mistaken was the ardour, with which he had pursued the toys and trifles of mortality! And, oh! he felt, how much deeper were the trespasses, for which he implored mercy, than those which he had pursued in others, with such insatiable resentment! The pale form of Horatia was ever present to his imagination; he felt, that his harsh reproaches, his cruel conduct, had driven her to despair and death! Often he exclaimed, in the impressive words of his favourite author,

"Oh, ill-starred wench!
When we shall meet at 'compt,
That look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl!"

"And where," he cried, "is the child she committed to my care? Did she think, when she promised me, it should be obedient, that, in a manner so horrible, I should claim its obedience? Oh, Magdalena, come; once more soothe me with that voice so like thy mother's! Those eyes, so full of soft forgiveness! Montaubrey too, the generous Montaubrey, who saved my life, who would have been to me as a son; oh, how did I repay him!"

In consequence of those feelings, and the urgency of Lord Ennersdale to see those he had so greatly wronged, Sir Eustace set out for London; and happily the Earl yet survived to experience the benefit of his friendly exertions.

At the sight of every familiar object which surrounded her, Magdalena's

tears fell abundantly. As they advanced into the interior of the castle, Agnes approached them, she courtseyed in silence; and her venerable countenance exprest a mixture of joy and sorrow. Magdalena took her hand, and faintly articulated an enquiry for Lord Ennersdale.

"Very, very ill," she replied; "thank God, you are come, my dear young Lady; my Lord begged to see you the instant you arrived."

"Lead me to him," said Magdalena.

"Yet pause one moment, my beloved," whispered Montaubrey, as leaning on his arm she advanced towards Lord Ennersdale's chamber; "pause, and reflect! So great is my dread of Lord Ennersdale's power over your mind; so intense the terror with which I recollect, how vainly I once warned you to *avoid his magic circle!* that even now I tremble, lest some snare should unawares enwrap you! That, in his

dying moments, he should yet obtain some promise of power to destroy my hopes, and give you to Sir Eustace!"

"Fear not," answered Magdalena; "oh, fear not, Montaubrey! think not so meanly of my fortitude; so ill of Lord Ennersdale; and never, never let a doubt of Sir Eustace Willoughby's rectitude and generosity, cross a mind, worthy to know and esteem him as he deserves!" "I doubt not him, I doubt not you!" returned Montaubrey; "but oh, Lord Ennersdale! to my alarmed imagination, he ever appears like some powerful enchanter, whose very breath has the potency of a spell, whose words contain a magic to ruin all my happiness!" "Powerful as his words may hitherto have been," replied Magdalena, "vainly would they now act upon me; a more powerful enchanter—love, approved, and ratified, by a father's voice, would render all his exertions nugatory! But, I am convinced

you wrong him; can we doubt the truth of that penitence so justly described by Sir Eustace. Whatever were the faults of my grand-father, hypocrisy never was amongst them. Detain me not, there, dearest Montaubrey; but let me hasten to that bed of sickness, whose pains, I am taught to believe, my presence can alleviate."

Relinquishing the hand he held, and with many a tender blessing, Montaubrey now suffered her to enter the chamber of Lord Ennersdale.

As she approached the bed Agnes preceded her; and in cautious accents, announced her arrival, "Come!"—exclaimed Lord Ennersdale, in a faint voice; "already!—Is it possible. Will she come to me; will she pronounce my forgiveness? oh, yes! she was ever good and gentle!"

"Her Ladyship is here, my Lord," answered Agnes; and Magdalena was instantly on her knees beside him,

"Come, Magdalena, come, child!" he exclaimed; "and

"Beat away the busy meddling fiend
Which lays strong seige unto my wretched soul!"

But are you alone, my girl? Is not your father with you, and Montaubrey?—Are you married, Magdalena?"

"No, my Lord," she answered, distressed beyond expression by the change in his appearance, and the wild incoherence of his language.—"Ha!" he exclaimed—"Not married! That is well!—I may then yet enjoy the last remaining wish of my heart!"

"What mean you, my Lord?" she hastily asked, a dark suspicion crossing her mind, inspired by the doubts Montaubrey had suggested; "my father is here, and Lord Montaubrey."

"Do you fear me, Magdalena?" he replied in softer accents; "I know too well the tones of that voice, when fear disturbs its naturally calm and harmonious sound! Too often, alas, have I

heard those tremulous accents, excited by my severity; but fear not now, Magdalena! My only wish is to make you happy, and compensate, as far as possible, the evils I have brought upon you; to witness the felicity I have so long, and cruelly delayed." "Pray, my dear Lord, compose yourself," said Magdalena; "at present my only wish is to see you better; the only thing I covet, to watch by your side and comfort you."

He sighed bitterly, and murmured some words, expressive of his unworthiness and his repentance: then, entreating her, if she were not too much fatigued, to sit by him, he dropt into a slumber, from which, in about an hour, he awoke, calm, composed, but evidently approaching the conclusion of his life.

CHAP. X.

"SUMMON," said Lord Ennersdale, "the generous Montaubrey, and him whom I have only known by the name of Ormington! Let me sacrifice to heaven the long cherished hatred, which, at the sound of that name, seems struggling to revive in my heart! Let us exchange forgiveness; if I have destroyed the happiness of his youth, let it not be forgotten, that he drew from me the duty and affections of my daughter, and heaped accumulated misery on my old age. But with recrimination, and resentment, I have done. Let me dedicate the small remainder of my life to acts of peace and reconciliation."——Yet, so imperative was the impulse of long indulged feeling, that

at the approach of the Marquis, Lord Ennersdale groaned and shaded his eyes; then with a strong effort of that powerful mind, whose mis-directed energies had caused all his errors, he stretched out his hand, and grasped, with eager reconcilement, that of the man whom his hatred had so long pursued! The gentler heart of the Marquis, touched by the scene, melted with pity and affectionate wishes. Sir Eustace stood a little behind, shaded by the curtain; and Montaubrey supporting Magdalena knelt by the side of the dying Earl.

"Montaubrey," said Lord Ennersdale, withdrawing his hand from the Marquis, and stretching it towards Reginald and Magdalena. "Forgive me the ungrateful wrongs I did you! Let my death-bed witness my reconciliation with all, on earth, I ever injured! And thou, bright spirit of my departed Horatia! wilt not thou, receive me with soft forgiveness, on the

confines of that other world whither I am hastening?"

Oh this solemn, this affecting repeal, every heart was softened, every eye dropped tears of pity and reconciliation.——"Did you, my dear Sir Eustace," continued Lord Ennersdale; "remember the request I desired you to make in my name, to Lord Montaubrey?" "Yes, my dear Lord," said Sir Eustace, suppressing his emotions; "and your wish was accomplished." "Magdalena," resumed Lord Ennersdale, "and you, Marquis, will you consent to oblige me? Montaubrey, have you the licence?" Montaubrey immediately produced a special licence; to procure which, had been his object in leaving the Marquis's house, just before they quitted London, Sir Eustace having brought a request from Lord Ennersdale, that he would come to Delamere so prepared. A few words explained to Magdalena, the wishes of

her grandfather, nor could she refuse his request, at an hour so solemn, that he might be permitted to witness her marriage, before he was removed for ever. Mr. Malcolm advanced; the Marquis's hand bestowed her on Montaubrey; Sir Eustace, by a strong exertion of fortitude, witnessed the ceremony with propriety and composure; and while Magdalena thought herself dreaming, Reginald led her to the feet of her father, to receive his blessing, as Countess of Montaubrey.

"Let me, also, add my solemn blessing, my warmest wishes, for the happiness of this dear young creature," said Lord Ennersdale, with greater energy than from his weak state might have been expected; "take her, Montaubrey! Rough was the schooling of her early years; severely was she taught to tremble at a frown; but never was her soft and innocent heart insensible to the faintest smile of approbation. Nobly has she supported adversity; gently she

met prosperity! No vindictive sentiment, no lurking taint of malice ever sullied her affectionate heart. Indulgence will not spoil her, whom unkindness never hardened. Ever turning, even to me, with love, which I rejected with asperity; still she retained affection where most others would have hated; no wonder her soft and tender disposition soon learned to idolize those from whom she first heard the voice of kindness! Be kind to her, Montaubrey, for well she deserves it; and recompense to her, in future years, the harshness which deprived her youth of pleasure and of joy!" He paused, exhausted, and Magdalena over-powered by his tenderness, and the fatigue of her hurried journey, fell half fainting on the hand he had extended to her. Montaubrey raised, and tenderly committed her to the care of Agnes, and the other female servants; who removed her from a scene too affecting to be longer endured. In the course of the

night Lord Ennersdale breathed his last. He died lamenting, that he had for so many years yielded up his heart to the controul of pride and hatred; and that he had not earlier listened to those celestial precepts, which command the practice of humility and forgiveness.

A messenger was instantly dispatched to West-hay, where the Dowager Lady Piercefield yet remained, to request her presence at Delamere; she came, and immediately removed Magdalena from a situation too trying for her feelings.

The Marquis, Montaubrey, and Sir Eustace, positively forbade Magdalena's attendance on the remains of Lord Ennersdale to their last abode; they joined in the solemn procession; and Lord Glenalbin shed over his grave the tears of generous forgiveness—yet, as he turned to weep in anguish over the tomb of Horatia, to recall the bitter moment, when hoping once more to

clasp her to his faithful heart, he had, even in that spot, found only her coffin to fill his arms, hardly, hardly could he obtain of his outraged feelings, to pardon the man to whose cruelty she had fallen a victim!

Magdalena would not leave Delamere till she had visited the graves of her grand-father and her mother. Oh, how many agitating thoughts rushed into her heart, as she looked upon them! "Oh why," she mentally exclaimed "why wert thou, noble, but erring man, so greatly mistaken? Didst thou not know, that all thy pride, all thy vindictive feelings, must end here, even here. Why didst thou suffer those stormy passions to disturb thy own happiness, and all with whom thou wert connected! But all is over! Though late thy repentance, may it, oh, may it have been effectual!"

To divert his daughter's tender and melancholy recollections Lord Glenalbin took her and her Lord to Scot-

land. They visited together, the ancient abbey of Ross-glen, now descended to her, and rejoiced the kind heart of Mabel Grey, by shewing to her, her former guest, raised as it were from the dead. How great was her delight to see him with the lovely creature she had thought so like her dear Horatia, and the noble youth to whom she was united. "I shud ha known ye anie where," said she to the Marquis, "although those clustering curls upo' yere brow are mingled wi a wee bit grey. But ye ha' the same kind look wi' your eye, the same saft and lively smile about yere mou', an my deer young lady has the vara same, joined tull her mither's dark and sparkling eyne, and the lovely fairness o' her skin." She parted from them with regret, and heard with joy their promise of repairing Ross-glen Abbey, and visiting that noble pile occasionally. From thence they proceeded to the interior of Scotland, where the Marquis presented to his connections and friends,

his beautiful daughter and noble son-in-law. Every where they were received with admiration and applause; and Lady Montaubrey, as the last remaining descendant of two distinguished Scotch families, was cherished, and almost worshipped, with a warmth of kindness which her own personal merits soon changed into tender and lasting affection. They quitted, with regret a nation whose admirable qualities never fail to excite the most sincere esteem in all who visit it.

Returning to London, they met the Dowager Lady Montaubrey, charmed to receive a daughter to whose virtues she had too much good sense, now the mists of prejudice were removed, to be blind; and whose rank and fortune even exceeded her ambitious wishes for her son.

Surrounded as Magdalena was with all that wealth could give, and blest with every felicity the most indulgent father and tenderest husband could

bestow, her affectionate heart yet breathed a wish for the happiness of Victoria Devereux. Lady Maitland entreated Lord and Lady Montaubrey to pass the Christmas recess at Priors-wood, and with pleasure they complied. Montaubrey, who had before seen little of Henrietta, was delighted with her vivacity and good sense; her wild fancies had subsided into the most prudent, but at the same time, the most animated demeanour; while the goodness and warmth of her heart had experienced no change. She was the delight of her husband, and the blessing of the neighbourhood in which she resided; her active charity still manifesting itself in the most earnest exertions to ameliorate the distresses of all around. Victoria, rescued by her example, from that tendency to self indulgence, which at one time depreciated her natural goodness, was animated without excess, and soft without yielding implicitly to every impulse.

"What can I do for that dear girl?" said Henrietta to Magdalena; "she still retains her attachment to Sir Eustace, and has rejected some excellent offers, though almost without a hope that he will ever distinguish her. Delicacy forbids my giving him a hint of the tenderness she has so long cherished! Yet once I thought before he had seen you, that he regarded Victoria with sentiments more tender than those paternal feelings he afterwards so kindly displayed. He comes here next week with my mother and Matilda, and I almost regret that I have taught Victoria that command of herself, which will prevent her from betraying her sentiments when they meet."

Sir Eustace met Montaubrey with the most open and friendly demonstrations of regard; all the regret with which he had anticipated their union, seemed subdued by the delight with which he contemplated their happiness. Matilda observed their felicity and that

of Henrietta with no small degree of envy, and only consoled herself with the hope, that as now Sir Eustace certainly never would marry, she should probably inherit much the largest share of his fortune, Mrs. Denbigh having promised all her's to Lady Maitland. Matilda therefore returned to her modelling and her botanical painting with her usual coldness, and an apparent composure, which, however, only veiled a heart, but too much the prey of bitter and devouring sentiments. The envy and dislike with which he had always distinguished Victoria, had been augmented by those wild sallies of wit and mockery with which Miss Devereux in the early part of their acquaintance, had marked her disapprobation of Matilda's insensibility and selfishness. Although Victoria had now divested her vivacity of all which could have rendered it offensive, Matilda never forgave her. A generous heart would easily have perceived

that Victoria never seriously intended to distress her, and have gladly seen the change which time and prudence had made in her manners; but Matilda's was not a generous heart, and she frequently even yet allowed her wish of annoying Victoria to predominate over her good breeding, although Miss Devereux studiously avoided every thing which might provoke her sarcasms. Matilda seemed indeed determined to prove the truth of Voltaire's remark; alas, how many young persons have experienced its correctness:

Le premier pas que l'on fait dans le monde,
Est celui que depend le reste de nos jours;
Ridicule une fois, on vous le croit toujours,
L'impression demeure. En vain, croissant en age,
On change de conduite, on prend un air plus sage.
On souffre encore long tems, de ce vieux prejugè
On est suspect encore lorsqu'on est corrigè;
Et j'ai vu quelque fois payer dans la veillesse,
Le tribut de defauts qu'on eut dans la jeunesse.

L'Indiscret, par Voltaire.

Miss Arlington's cold penetration had speedily developed the real senti-

ments of Victoria, and knowing the delicacy of Sir Eustace, she hoped to disgust him by tearing aside the veil which the modesty of Victoria, and the discretion of Henrietta had thrown over them.

One morning while the females of the party were seated at their different tables, all engaged in some pleasing employment, and the gentlemen with newspapers before them, were discussing those wonderful changes which now began to astonish all Europe; and tracing the march of the armies on the map, mingling at intervals some lighter and more sportive topics, in which they were joined by their fair companions; Miss Arlington suddenly took it into her head to ask Lady Montaubrey if she were not surprized on her return to London, to find Miss Devereux without any matrimonial engagement. "Not particularly so," said Magdalena, colouring a little, from a consciousness of knowing Victoria's real sentiments, "Miss De-

vereux is still so young! Besides, she has every right to be nice and difficult in her choice." "If all the offers we hear of have really been made," said Matilda, "she is certainly difficult enough. Why, Victoria, they say you refused the young Marquis of Charville, who will one day be Duke of Delmont!" Victoria only blushed, and Henrietta laughed, but did not deny the assertion, feeling a sort of gratification in seeing Matilda torment herself, while she hoped to teaze Victoria. "Well," continued Matilda, "if your ambition Miss Devereux, soars higher than to the Marquis of Charville, I cannot guess what would satisfy it." Still Victoria was silent, but could not help blushing, and looking confused. "Perhaps," said Lord Montaubrey sportively; "Miss Devereux's reigning passion is not ambition; perhaps, she left her heart in India!" Victoria, at this distant guess, breathed more freely, and lifted up her eyes with a smile to Lord Montaubrey; but how was she

overwhelmed with confusion and dismay, when Matilda replied, "No, no, not *in India*, my Lord!" adding in a lower tone, but yet loud enough to be distinctly heard, "depend upon it her heart came to England, in the *same ship* with *herself*, though perhaps not exactly in her *own possession!*" A burning blush; spread itself instantly over Victoria's face and neck, and her eyes fell with an expression of trouble and confusion, which obliged Lord Montaubrey to withdraw his. Henrietta and Magdalena both became scarlet, and Sir Eustace, whose attention had been attracted by this conversation, gazed on them all alternately, with looks which seemed to read their very hearts; then changing colour two or three times, he rose suddenly, and went out of the room.

"Bless me!" said Lady Maitland, starting up, "who can bear to sit any longer so near that enormous fire, and with the sun shining into the room, more like June than December; take

your shawl, Victoria," throwing one to her, "and come out on the lawn a little; come Lady Montaubrey, I see you are dying for a little fresh air. Have you not done poring over those endless books and maps yet, good men? Come, do let us all take a stroll this fine morning." As she passed, she contrived to throw down a collection of maps and plans, whispering to Magdalena, "you see I have not forgotten my promise made at West-hay, the day of the *aviary* story! Nothing like a little confusion, to hide what one wishes to conceal. I wish to my heart, I dared throw down all Matilda's detestable wax figures, and make her suffer a little in her turn, and I would do it, if it were not in my own house!"

Victoria, trembling and hardly able to stand, held by the arm of Magdalena, who was scarcely less agitated. "Oh, my dear Magdalena," she said, "did you ever hear any thing so cruel? Too surely Sir Eustace understood her allu-

sion! How inhuman, to punish with such severity, the trifling offences I formerly gave her!"

"Regard it not, my love;" said Magdalena, "I most earnesly hope her malice will bring its own punishment."

Montaubrey now joined them, and drawing Magdalena's arm through one of his, offered the other to Miss Devereux; he observed, that both had been disconcerted, but far from oppressing them by appearing to remark it, he endeavoured to divert their attention, by conversing with them, in that soft, but animated manner, which rendered him at all times so attractive. By degrees they recovered their composure, but Victoria's was again shaken, when she saw Sir Eustace approaching them. She cast a glance upon Magdalena, which bespoke at once her confusion, and the dread she had, of reading in his eyes, any proof that he either triumphed in, or lamented the late disclosure.

Sir Eustace however, was too much

master of his passions, to suffer them to be visible, except on occasions too powerful for human fortitude to controul them.

A stranger would not have perceived, that his manner differed from its usual calm and collected tone; but Magdalena, long accustomed to observe the little variations of his countenance and voice, remarked, that in speaking to Victoria, he was unusually respectful and observant, while his eyes and accent, betrayed a particular softness and affectionate interest.

From these appearances, Lady Montaubrey augured well for the happiness of Victoria, and these appearances every day confirmed, till soon it was evident, that the wounded heart of Sir Eustace, was gradually turning to Victoria for consolation; and that soothed by her tenderness, and calmed by her soft, unobstrusive attention, he was almost insensibly led to look to her for the happiness of his future life. The genuine pleasure he evinced in her society,

tinged the bright complexion of Victoria with the warmest colouring of felicity. Imperceptibly led by the attentions of Sir Eustace, to display the real treasures of her mind and heart, he now rapidly discovered, that under the sensible guidance of Lady Maitland, this charming girl had acquired a stability of principle, a forgetfulness of self, which he had in their early acquaintance, alone thought wanting to render her perfect.

Thus did the malicious intentions of Matilda promote the very event she most wished to deprecate. Victoria obtained that heart, in the possession of which she had so long placed her warmest wishes. And the generous Sir Eustace, rewarded and consoled by her tender and undeviating affection, no longer lamented the diappointments of his youth, or the loss of Magdalena.

Lord and Lady Montaubrey, the Marquis, Lord and Lady Piercefield, and Sir Arthur and Lady Maitland,

seemed henceforth to form but one family, and whether at Delamere, Westhay, Mount-Aubrey, or Prior's Wood, whether in England or Scotland, they seldom were long divided.

Magdalena blessed with uncommon felicity, and rejoicing in that of her friends, was amply repaid in her present happiness, for the privations and sorrows of her early life; while Montaubrey almost worshipped a being, who knew so well how to blend the most attractive and feminine softness, with the most admirable firmness and decision of character.

As a wife, as a mother, she was a pattern of excellence, and her tenderness as a daughter, bestowed on the declining years of Lord Glenalbin, a felicity which he had long imagined he could never more attain. His title will center in the family of his daughter, and at a future period, that of Ennersdale will also, in all probability, be revived in the person of one of Lady Montaubrey's children.

Matilda alone remained discontented, and unhappy. Those accomplishments, which she considered rather as the virtue and business, than the embellishment of life, failed in attracting that admiration, which with less selfishness and pride, they certainly would have excited. Viewing with envy and affected disdain, the happiness she could neither enjoy nor injure, she continued a burthen upon her friends, and a constant torment to herself.

Lord Piercefield and Isabella, gay, volatile, but affectionate, experienced a less certain felicity, than attended the union of those characters, more fitted to enjoy the calm blessings of domestic life; yet their lighter and less steady characters, gave relief and variety to the family circle, in which they, as well as those of a more tender and exalted spirit, acknowledged real happiness alone existed.

FINIS.

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